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FEUDAL TYRANTS;

OR,

The Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans.

A ROMANCE.

TAKEN FROM THE GERMAN.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY M. G. LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF

The Bravo of Venice, Adelgitha, Rugantino, &c.

VOL. III.

THIRD EDITION.

The portals sound, and pacing forth
With stately steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of regal birth,
And mitred fathers in long order go. GRAY.

London:

Printed by D. N. SHURY, Berwick Street, Soho,

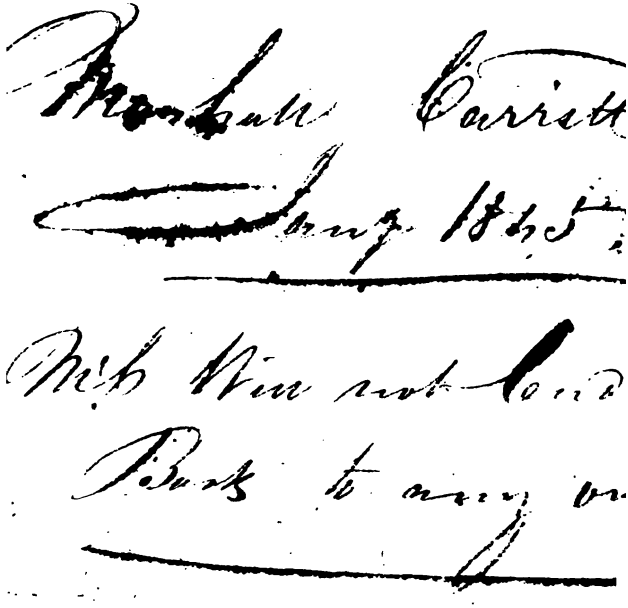
FOR J. E. HUGHES, WIGMORE STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1807.

249. s. 220.

FEUDAL TYRANTS.

VOL. III.



FEUDAL TYRANTS,

&c. &c. &c.

PART THE FIFTH.

COUNT DONAT's DAUGHTERS.

PART II.

MEMOIRS

Found in the Cell of a Nun, after her Decease, in the Convent of Zurich.

SINCE Amabel Bloomberg traced the letters which will be found with this, how many years have elapsed! how many changes have taken place! How

many persons are now insensible dust, who are described as agitated with such anxious fears and ardent hopes, by the pens of Amabel and the Damsels of Sargans! Accident has also made me mistress of the letters of those unfortunate sisters. Accident, did I say? Surely, it was something more than mere chance, which brought them into the hands of her, who is most able to supply that chasm, which otherwise would have been left in these adventures.

To undertake this task I have both leisure and information sufficient. My fate was too closely united with that of the sisters, to permit the slightest particular concerning them to be concealed from me; and jointly with theirs will my

ame be handed down to poste-

: is it not an idle vanity, a love of
ly fame, which makes me desire
ecies of immortality?—Well then,
repress the wish. Long practised
-denial, I will make even this last
ice to my celestial spouse, and
write, as if I treated of strangers
of interests quite foreign to myself.
ne shall know my name except
en, to whom alone is thoroughly
n, how much I have suffered!
hen I entered the world, the course
nocence and beauty lay among a
sand snares and pit-falls, which
the more dangerous from being
artfully concealed. This is a truth

which I learnt to my cost; before I sought, and found, tranquillity in a convent.

Amabel was blind to those snares; though they were spread carelessly enough for her to have seen them, had not her own guileless nature thrown a veil over her eyes, and had not female obstinacy made her reject the prudent warnings of her best friends.

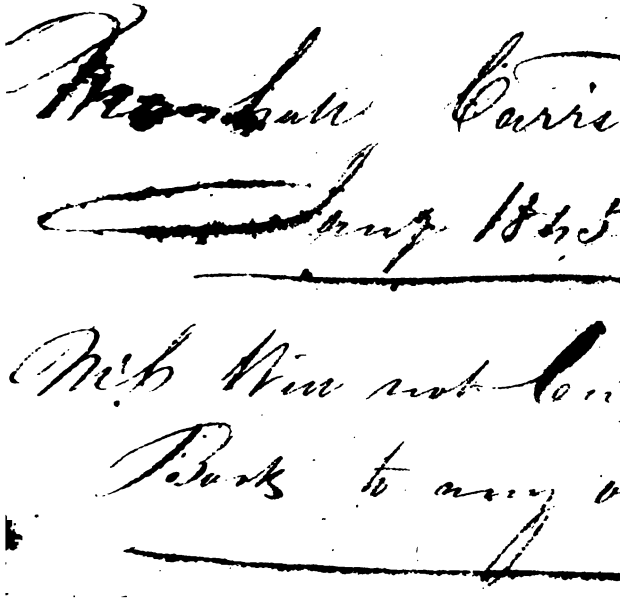
The visit to Engelberg, which she had agreed upon in concert with her brother's wife, was made the next day; and the latter, as young, imprudent, and unsuspicious as Amabel, undertook to excuse her sister-in-law's absence to the jealous Arnold, and the sick old man, who suffered no quarter of an hour

hour to pass without enquiring for his daughter. However, Juttila engaged to invent some means for satisfying him till Amabel's return, which was delayed much longer than either of them intended.

How indeed could she return so speedily, since adventures encountered her on the road, on which she little reckoned, and whose nature was of sufficient consequence to have a fearful influence over herself, and over all those who were most dear to her? Alas! the cottage which she left with such a thoughtless heart, she was destined to revisit no more with such content: the fate of the two sisters, which she was so eager to learn, was now enveloped by such

FEUDAL TYRANTS.

VOL. III.



Nun's conversation, and gave herself up entirely to the joy of being assured, that one of her friends at least was safe in the arms of friendship and of maternal love.

—"Oh! that I could but have the same assurance respecting my beloved Emmeline!" thus said Amabel to herself, as she hastened back to her brother's cottage; "Oh! that as I pass homewards, chance would but throw Wolfenrad in my way, that I might learn from him what he knows about the dear-one! He might just tell me in half a dozen words, and then hurry away, in order that I might not blush too deep a crimson, when the severe Censurer of my actions looks me in the

face, and says with his magisterial air, —' Now, Amabel! whence do you come, and with whom have you spoken?'—How ridiculous, that Arnold should take it into his head, that an old man like Wolfenrad has designs upon a young creature like me, not yet twenty! Yet ridiculous as it is, his anxiety proceeds from the warmth of his affection for me, and I ought to forgive my good Arnold for the faults of his head, when I recollect the kindness of his heart."—

Such were the thoughts which occupied Amabel, as she hastily retraced the long way between her home and the Convent; and as she past along, she threw many an anxious look on every

side in hopes of seeing the man, who alone could confirm to her the fortunate escape of her friend. Wolfenrad had frequently business that carried him to Engelberg, and it was by no means improbable, that she should encounter him on her way.

In fact, the tempter had long been at no great distance from the fair pilgrim, though without her seeing him; since he stole along concealed by a thick hawthorn plantation, which bordered more than half the road between the village and the Convent of Engelberg.

It is easy for the wicked to guess what steps will be taken by unsuspecting innocence, whose proceedings are the natural result of existing circum-

stances and feelings. Wolfenrad knew how warmly Amabel's heart was interested about her friends; he had given her hopes of obtaining intelligence respecting them; he had pointed out the place, where a part of those hopes might be realized; and he was therefore certain of finding her on the road to that place, before many days were elapsed. He had accidentally missed seeing her on her way to Engelberg; but when on her return she was descending the Convent-hill, he espied her from behind the watch-tower which stands at the farthest extremity of the mount, and then hastened to shelter himself behind the hawthorn hedge, in order that he might unseen watch her motions, and

 discover

discover what temper she was in, before he accosted her.

And thus did he for some time steal along, examining every change of her expressive countenance, and drawing but too just conclusions of the subject, which employed her thoughts. Her look, now gay, now sorrowful, and the impatient glances which she frequently threw around her, would have been sufficient to betray her, even though a few broken sentences, which escaped from her in the anxiety of her mind, had not left him without a doubt of his presence being perfectly welcome.

Wolfenrad's plans for the innocent girl's ruin had been so long arranged, that they were ready to be carried into effect

effect at a moment's warning; nor could he have wished for a more favourable opportunity than the present. The fiercest passion for Amabel reigned in his bosom, and deceived *him*, who was so well skilled in deceiving others. He fancied, that in her impatient looks, in the tone which she used in pronouncing his name occasionally, there was something more than mere friendship for Emmeline, and that love was the motive that made her so anxious to meet him! Immortal powers! Love! love from a girl, pure as innocence itself, for such an earthly dæmon, a dæmon both in person and in mind!

—"Yet however she may be disposed," 'twas thus he argued with himself,

self, "too abrupt an appearance, too hasty a discovery of my views, might do me a prejudice, and put her too much upon her guard. When her impatience is worked up to the highest pitch, I shall be the more secure of her."—

And therefore he still remained invisible, and hastened onwards, keeping still a little way before her; so that when the fair pilgrim reached the end of the plantation, and emerged into the open plain, she descried him crossing the path at some distance, as if totally unaware of her approach.

Amabel gave a cry of joy, called him by his name, and flew to join him.

—"Is it you, my fair dame?" answered Wolfenrad. "What would you with

with me?"—and he stopped, as waiting for her to come up to him.

—"Oh! tell me! tell me! give me some tidings of the damsel of Sargans!"—

—"You have been to Engelberg, and surely must have heard more there, than I am able to tell you."—

"Oh! no, no, no! Emmeline! speak of Emmeline!"—

—"Why, the Lady Emmeline.... Concealment being absolutely necessary .... But we are close to your jealous brother's house, and he may take offence at our conference—Farewell! I must find an opportunity of communicating what I know unobserved, when I return from Uri."—

"From

"From Uri? Heavens! and when do you go thither, and how long shall you remain away?"—

—"I set out to-morrow; as to my stay, I fear the disturbances there will make my return very distant."—

Amabel's impatience to know something decisive respecting her friend now grew beyond all bounds. She intreated him at least to put it out of doubt that Emmeline had been saved from the flames, and hesitated not to follow him into a bye-path, which conducted to the Castle. As they passed along, the deceiver began a long and wonderful narrative of Emmeline's adventures, which occupied his auditor's whole attention; but as it contained not one syllable of truth, it would

would be superfluous to relate it here.

—"But one question more!" said Amabel at length, and stopped. "See! night is approaching; we are already at the foot of the Castle-hill, and I have still a weary way to traverse, ere I can regain my brother's cottage, where, I fear, I must be already missed. You assure me that Emmeline is safe, and is concealed in the neighbourhood: Oh! tell me then *where* she is concealed, for my bosom pants to embrace her!"—

—"That were easily done. You see the Castle is close at hand: thither have I brought her, and I mean to convey her with me to Uri to-morrow, since the disturbances which prevail in these

these parts render them an unsafe abode."—

—"To Uri? To-morrow? Cruel, cruel Wolfenrad! Would you then have removed her, without suffering me to see her for one moment?"—

—"How could I have contrived an interview without betraying the secret? Had not accident thrown you in my way, I should not have had an opportunity of even telling you, that she is in your neighbourhood. However, as soon as she was out of the reach of discovery, you would have received a letter explaining every thing. I left her occupied in writing it, and when finished it was to be delivered to your husband's care, who is now with her at the Castle,

Castle, and who has been the chief means of bringing her hither in safety."—

—"What say you? My husband? Is Edmund then with Emmeline? Oh! lead me to him, dear Wolfenrad, I *must* accompany you to the Castle; permit me to pass this last evening with the dear lady; or at least suffer me to embrace her once more, and assure her of my unchanged affection, and then my husband can conduct me back to my brother."—

Wolfenrad heard this proposal with a malicious smile, and answered that for *his* part he had no objection; but he suggested his fears, lest her taking such a step should displease the suspicious Arnold,

Arnold, who surpassed her husband in jealousy a thousand fold.

—" Oh! heed not that!" exclaimed Amabel; " while I am with *you*, I can set all suspicions at defiance!"—

She said this thoughtlessly, for she alluded to his age and ugliness. The miscreant however interpreted it to his own taste, and saw in it the confirmation of his insolent hopes. He was on the point of rewarding the avowal by a tender pressure of her hand, which perhaps might have opened her eyes, ere it was too late: but she prevented him by making a thousand fond enquiries respecting her beloved Edmund, which put him again upon his guard, and which were not ended till they arrived

at

at the Castle. The gates were closed: Wolfenrad sounded his horn; the draw-bridge descended. He entered the Castle; Amabel followed him, and the moment that she had passed the threshold, heard with terror the noise of a port-cullis falling behind her.

How strange is it, that we should frequently remain thoroughly blind till we reach a certain point, and then be rouzed at once from our delusions by some unimportant circumstance! Amabel has frequently told me since, that the sound of that port-cullis (though nothing unusual in the Castle) gave her the first indistinct idea of her imprudence and the danger of her situation.

Her voice faltered, as she pronounced the

the names of Edmund and Emmeline, while she hastily withdrew her hand, which Wolfenrad had now seized with an air of impetuous passion. She looked him anxiously in the face, and her eyes read with horror in his an expression, which explained to her the whole fearful secret.

Yet she was still unwilling to believe that man so great a villain, whom she had long believed so much her friend. It was not till she was convinced, that neither Edmund nor Emmeline were in the *Castle*; that she found herself totally alone with the wretch, whom she had despised as being too insignificant to be dangerous; and that an old woman, whom (in order to calm the first violence

violence of her feelings) he had produced to her as his wife, was nothing more than a domestic; it was not till then, that she saw the whole business clearly, and the sight was one of such danger, that perhaps had she been a woman of a common mind, it would have thrown her into such a state of bodily insensibility, or of mental dejection, as might effectually have prevented all endeavours to effect an escape. But Amabel was a daughter of Helvetia! that is, she was a woman, whose powers both of body and mind existed in their fullest vigour; neither the first was weakened by luxurious indulgence, nor the second liable to be subdued by imaginary terrors. In spite

too

of all that credulity and imprudence which had betrayed her into her present danger, her imagination was still both clear and acute enough to suggest a means for effecting her rescue, or at least for gaining time.

She appeared reserved and shy, and sat down in silence to the voluptuous entertainment, which was now served up by Wolfenrad's confidante; the only person, whom he suffered to penetrate into that part of the Castle. Yet did Amabel contrive to give her silence the appearance of being preserved much against her will; she refused not at Wolfenrad's request to lay aside the large hat, which overshadowed her face, and which (as he complained) con-

cealed from him numberless beauties; nor did she draw away very hastily or with a look of extreme displeasure her soft white hand, when he prest it passionately between his own.

—"May I flatter myself," said the deceived deceiver, "that Amabel does not absolutely hate me?"—

—"My religion forbids my hating any one."—

—"And you are not very much offended at my having employed a little artifice to procure myself the happiness of this evening?"—

"—Artifice?—Nay; the effect of accident, and.... and, I am afraid, my own inclination was so much on your side, that...."—

—"My

—"My charming Amabel! then I may hope, that Wolfenrad is not entirely indifferent to you!"—

—"Indifferent? Oh! that you are not *indeed!*—And as to hoping.... why, nobody can prevent your doing that, you know."—

And with this kind of doubtful and flattering discourse did she long entertain the betrayer, and forgot not to fill the silver bowls from time to time; though the effects of his frequent draughts prevented him from observing, that while she poured wine into his goblet, nothing but water entered into her own.

At the expence of a few disgusting kisses, which were forced from her occasionally

casionally, she at length had the pleasure to see Wolfenrad fall senseless from his chair. It was midnight; the old woman had long since betaken herself to rest, and Amabel found herself at liberty to wander through the vacant chambers in search of some means of escape.

Alas! the locks and bars were immoveable, and no keys were to be found.—She at length discovered an unfastened door opening into a balcony; it overhung the middle court; the height was fearful; yet would she have gladly ran the hazard of springing below, if she had not dreaded the meeting there with a greater danger, than that from which she was flying. The

Castle-

Castle-Garrison occupied this quarter. She heard from above the conversation, which passed between the sentinels; and its nature was such as to leave her no hope of finding from them protection or even pity. It also informed her, that Wolfenrad's bounty, and his winking at their committing the most heinous offences, had united them too closely to his interests, to admit even a chance of their acting in opposition to his will.

She wept in agony! She rung her hands! At length despair took possession of her whole soul. She eyed for a while the torch, which flamed in her hand, and in a moment of desperate resolution she determined to set the Castle on fire; in hopes of either being able to

effect her escape during the conflagration, or at least of saving herself by death from existing for one instant with dishonour.

Thus resolved, she was on the point of quitting the balcony when a well-known name struck her ear. She stopt, and listened. Two sentinels stood beneath the balcony, and she heard one tell the other, that it would be necessary to wake Wolfenrad; for that he (the sentinel) was just returned from the outer wall, and had seen a company of soldiers crossing over the plain; that he had hailed one of them, and found them to be part of those who had accompanied Bloomberg to Sargans, and that their leader with the rest of his troops would follow them before mid-day.

—"Bloom-

—"Bloomberg their leader?" said his companion. "And since when has the gentle peace-loving Bloomberg turned soldier, and what has Wolfenrad to fear from a fellow, who but yesterday followed the plough?"—

"Faith," rejoined the first, "this is a time, when every countryman exchanges his sickle and ploughshare for a sword and spear; and I know enough of Edmund Bloomberg to be convinced, that the carrying off his pretty wife will make him rage like a mad bull."—

—"Carrying off, d'ye call it?" said the other; "I think, she seemed to follow Wolfenrad of her own accord; and if Bloomberg draws his sword upon her account, the more fool Bloomberg!"—

A burst of insulting laughter terminated this conversation, every syllable of which pierced Amabel to the heart; and the soldiers separated, having agreed that it was unnecessary to disturb Wolfenrad that night, and that the news of Bloomberg's return might safely be delayed till the next morning.

Amabel burst into tears; but she soon recollected, that she had better occupation than weeping. A thousand ideas floated before her mind, inspired by the distant hope which she derived from the assurance, that in a few hours her husband would pass within sight of her prison. The great object therefore was to gain time to wait for his arrival with safety, and find means to inform him of her confinement in the Castle.

Accident

Accident furnished her with both. She returned trembling into the apartment, where the vile Wolfenrad still lay sleeping, the most odious picture of intoxication that the eye ever witnessed. Despair made her snatch a knife from the table, and she rushed to plunge it into his heart; but here the softness of woman's nature got the better of her resolution and her vengeance. She threw down the knife, and hastened into the balcony, that in the free air and under the sky thick sown with stars, she might implore the Creator of that sky to look down upon and assist her in this hour of fear and danger. She rose from prayer much comforted: she turned towards the East, and looked

eagerly for the arrival of the dawn, whose approach was already announced. She soon perceived, that the balcony in which she stood, though much too high from the ground to admit of her throwing herself from it without being dashed to pieces, at least commanded an extensive view over the surrounding country, and was admirably calculated for summoning any passing travellers to her assistance.

Oh! now, would but the sleeping Libertine doze away the morning, all might be well! Often did she steal softly into the chamber to see, whether he gave any signs of waking; again the knife attracted her gaze. She seized it, and concealed it in her bosom, as her last resource should all others fail.

It was now broad-day. Wolfenrad stretched himself, yawned, and opened his red eye-lids. Amabel fled to a distant corner, but his voice soon compelled her to return.

—"My charming angel," said he, "come near me. You filled my goblet last night too generously, and this morning I feel myself still under the influence of the too potent liquor. Beshrew me, but I am marvellously indisposed."—

—"Let not that trouble you, my dear friend," answered Amabel, while she advanced a few paces, trembling with apprehension; "while I resided in the Castle of Sargans, Count Donat frequently found himself unwell from a

similar indulgence in convivial pleasures; but he soon got the better of his indisposition by using a warm bath, which never failed to restore him to perfect health within an hour. In the next chamber there is a large brazen cistern; the water shall be heated for you without delay, and as soon as your bath is ready, I will call some of your attendants to convey you thither."—

Without waiting for his answer, she hastened to her new occupation; she soon returned with one pitcher of water, then went back again for another, and thus contrived to get rid of near an hour, never failing as she passed the balcony to cast from it a glance of enquiry, whether there were yet no signs of her deliverer.

It was in vain, that Wolfenrad desired her to call some of the servants to spare her this unnecessary labour. Amabel remonstrated against the impropriety of suffering herself to be seen by strangers in his apartment, and at the same time protested, that she felt the greatest pleasure in taking this trouble, since it was for *him* that she took it. Wolfenrad knew not how to find terms sufficiently strong to express his gratitude for her attention, and protested, that he had not flattered himself with the idea of possessing so warm an interest in her heart.

He was still expatiating on the satisfaction which this agreeable discovery gave him, when the sound of trampling

at

at a distance struck her hearing. She looked towards the window, and descried a cloud of dust. Down fell the pitcher from her hand.

—"Your bath is ready!" she said in a voice scarcely audible from agitation; and while Wolfenrad staggered into the adjoining chamber, she hastened into the balcony. The horsemen came nearer; she recognized many countenances well-known to her; she recognized among them that of Edmund Bloomberg.

His name pronounced in her loudest tone, the cry of "Help for the Virgin's sake!" and her handkerchief waved in the air towards the horsemen, soon attracted their attention. With equal

surprise

surprise and terror Bloomberg recognized his wife at a balcony of the Castle, heard her implore assistance, and flew with his brave companions to afford it. What followed, I shall relate briefly: the narrative of this adventure may appear already too circumstantial, since its connexion with the Sisters of Sargans is not at present evident; but it had too material an influence upon the fate of all Helvetia to admit of my passing it over with a slight mention.

Before the Castle-Garrison had time to communicate to their Superior that intelligence, which they ought to have conveyed to him the preceding night, and while all hands were busily employed in guarding against an attack on the main-

main-quarter, Bloomberg and his friends had already forced their way into the Castle at that neglected side, whence Amabel had called to them for assistance.

The bath, in which the still half-intoxicated Wolfenrad hoped to get rid of the effects of his night's excess, was crimsoned with his blood. Amabel again found herself safe in the hands of her husband, in whose bosom delight contended with indignation. The opposition of the garrison to the complete conquest of the Castle was but trifling; and this fortress would certainly have remained in the hands of the Helvetians (a circumstance to them of the greatest advantage) had their numbers been strong

strong enough to resist the troops, who were shortly after sent against them by the Abbot of St. Gall and other allies of the governor. Bloomberg's friends were inadequate to maintaining the possession of their conquest, and in a few days afterwards he was compelled to evacuate the Castle.

Hitherto, the resentment of the multitude had been restrained within some bounds: but Amabel's adventure and the death of Wolfenrad were the signal for open rebellion. The whole country was *floated* with blood: would that I could say, that the blood which flowed was entirely that of the foes of freedom! But alas! the number of the oppressors was too mighty. The Helvetians

tians were over-powered; and after displaying the sentiments and performing the actions of heroes, Edmund Bloomberg, Arnold Melthal, and his venerable father Henric (to whom patriotism and his daughter's injuries had restored some of his youthful strength) were constrained to fly from those beloved unhappy vallies, which once had been the favourite abodes of freedom and tranquillity.

The name of "flight" was of itself offensive to Helvetian candour and courage; the place to which they were compelled to address their flight, made it no less painful than disgraceful. Altdorf, which was in the jurisdiction of Gessler, whose tyranny had already been the

cause

cause of such bitter sufferings to Henric and Arnold, was the only refuge which remained to them. By remaining here quiet and concealed, till time allowed them to find fresh means of resisting their enemies, they hoped to escape Gessler's notice; and accordingly they hastened to take shelter at Altdorf, with the brave William Tell, Bloomberg's half-brother: here also they were sure of a powerful protector in the person of Walter Forest, a man whose situation and native greatness of mind struck awe into the bosom even of the insolent Gessler.

Here then the fugitives remained concealed, and nourished hopes of better times, which perhaps would have made

made even the present chearful, had not domestic discord obtruded itself into their little circle. The imprudence with which Amabel had thrown herself into the seducer's snare, in spite of all his warnings and remonstrances, had not passed uncensured by her brother. His bitter reproaches sometimes excited Edmund's anger, and sometimes his jealousy; and the poor girl would have been absolutely wretched, had not her father sustained her cause, and had not her innocence found a most strenuous advocate in William Tell. It is true, the language of veracity, in which she related her unadorned story, was not to be mistaken; but still it required Tell's cool unprejudiced nature, and his noble

noble guileless heart, to see every circumstance in its real colours.

He at length succeeded in restoring perfect harmony in Bloomberg's family, and Amabel blessed him for the second time as the author of all her earthly happiness. Perhaps, her entire reconciliation with her husband was a little forwarded by Arnold's absence. This impetuous young man had been the ringleader of those, who at the Easter feast had insulted the Abbot of St. Gall by singing the ballad of "Bishop Ulric;" the Abbot had not forgotten it; and the unfortunate Arnold at length fell into one of the many snares, which had been spread for him by his priestly foe. Doubtless, he would have fallen a victim

victim to the Abbot's vengeance, had not Werner Bernsdorf, by means which it is unnecessary to relate circumstantially, contrived to release him from his dungeon, and sheltered him in his own house.

Though Amabel had received her husband's full pardon, still the reconciliation had taken place too freshly to allow her as yet to feel quite at her ease: and now when the news arrived that her brother (whom she loved most dearly in spite of his violence) was a prisoner, she would have had sufficient reason to be unhappy, even had she not been tormented by the most cruel anxiety respecting the fate of the Damsels of Sargans. She ceased not to make en-

quiries concerning them; and at length she received the confirmation of her bitterest apprehensions. Amalberga was beyond a doubt totally in Landenberg's power, who (in spite of all Wolfenrad's assertions to the contrary) kept her confined in the Castle of Rasburg; nor was it less certain, that the Lady Emmeline had perished in the flames of St. Roswitha's Sanctuary. Report spread far and wide many strange anecdotes respecting that conflagration, which I shall relate in another place; in truth, there is no one better able to give an account of that dreadful incident than myself.

The tears, which Amabel shed for herself and for her beloved friends, were soon

soon required by a still more painful cause: misfortunes now awaited her, which were worthy to be mourned with tears of blood.

The furious Gessler's insolence increased with every succeeding day. His most earnest care was to discover those who disapproved of him, that he might revenge himself by their torments. At length his pride and folly grew to such a height, that he fixed the plumed bonnet (which he usually wore) upon a lance in the market-place of Altdorf, and ordered, that all who passed should bow before it. The sneering populace obeyed, and contented themselves with whispering to each other, that they had much rather pay their respect

respect to the empty hat, than the wicked head which it was accustomed to decorate: but William Tell and some few others of the principal inhabitants passed by the bonnet proudly and with unbending necks. From that moment did Gessler mark them down as the future victims of his revenge and rancour.

Had the tyrant dared to lay violent hands on Tell, or had he contrived means of stamping the mark of infamy on his reputation; had he sold the wife of his bosom for a slave, or murdered his infants before his eyes; still would all these atrocities have been excelled by that, which now entered his infernal brain. A prize was to be contended for

by archers. The sport was interrupted by the arrival of Gessler. What was the horror of all who heard him, when he commanded his guards to seize Tell's son, a lovely child but four years old, and bind him to the tree which had been selected as a mark for the arrows. He then declared aloud with the most impious execrations, that the heads of six of Tell's relations (whom he had confined upon some slight pretences) should fall before night, unless the father would engage at a considerable distance to fix a dart into an apple, which should be placed on the head of the child.

How did the father burn with secret indignation, when Gessler dared to lay before him this unnatural proposal!

No earthly force could have compelled him to arm his hand for the performance of an action so uncertain and so fearful; yet in fact the bow and arrow could be scarcely called an uncertain weapon in the hands of the most dexterous archer in Helvetia: and after a few moments past in thought he confidently accepted a proposal, whose atrocity (he was certain) was thoroughly felt by all present; and whose consequence he trusted would be the kindling the fire of liberty in every bosom till it should at length break into open flames, and the emancipating his country for ever from its present state of ignominious bondage.

A glance, more expressing contempt

than wrath, was darted by Tell's dark eyes upon the Governor, as he rocked himself backwards and forwards upon his elevated chair of state, and looked down upon the circle of noble Helvetians, whom the sports had attracted to Altdorf, as if they had been creatures of an inferior kind.

Gessler was too void of sensibility to understand the meaning of the glance, which was darted on him by Tell's piercing eye. He only smiled contemptuously at having compelled the pride of this great mind to stoop itself to his orders, when he saw him press the lovely laughing child, his latest-born, to his heart with passion, and then bear him in his arms to the tree, where he was

destined to take his stand. The apple, which was the nominal mark for that arrow, whose point Gessler hoped to see crimsoned with human blood, was fixed on the child's head by the hands of the unhappy father.

Gessler's attendants prepared to bind the innocent creature to the tree; but a spark of paternal spirit already burned in the soul of the son.

—"I am an Helvetian!" cried he with boyish eagerness; "I am not afraid of death, but of bonds: why, if my father *really* wanted to kill me, do you think I would run away?"—

All withdrew from the place, where Death's intended victim stood calm and sweetly-smiling, like a second Isaac. The

multitude, agonized with terror, could scarcely be heard to breathe: Tell had already taken his station. All were still, all dreading, lest the father's hand, rendered trembling and uncertain by anxiety for his darling, should for the first time miss the mark; when the arrow whistled through the air, and fixed itself in the apple just above the crown of the child's head, who saw it coming towards him, and smiled as he marked its flight.

Now then all rushed eagerly to learn the event of this awful scene. Some exclaimed—"He is fallen! he is fallen!"—But the boy had only stooped to pick up the apple which the force of the blow had struck from his head; and he now

now presented it to his father, who had flown to embrace his rescued darling with speed scarce inferior to that of his arrow.

—"I was certain, father," cried the child, as he hung round the neck of the breathless Tell, "I was certain, that you were not *really* going to kill your own William!"—

—"Kill *thee?* exclaimed the father; "sooner would I have driven the arrow into my own heart! But eternal curses and sudden death to him, who would have made a man the murderer of his own child! Look!" he continued, while he clasped the boy to his breast with one hand, and with the other drew from his bosom a dart, which he held

towards Gessler, " Look, monster! had the first arrow pierced my son's breast, *this* should have been buried to the very beard in *thine*.—For this time thou art safe; but yet rest thou assured, that at the last thou shalt not escape unpunished! Though *I* may spare thee, Heaven will *not*."—

—" Vengeance! vengeance! death and curses to the tyrant! Eternal destruction to the infernal Gessler and all the miscreants who assist him!" thus exclaimed the multitude with one voice; while they closed round Tell in order to conduct him home in safety, and protect him from the Governor's guards, to whom a signal had been given to fall upon him without delay.

But

But the friends of liberty were too weak in numbers to resist their powerful oppressors. Before the gallant Tell had retraced half the way to his cottage, his companions were dispersed, and himself delivered into the hands of his enemy. Gessler commanded, that he should be bound, thrown into a vessel which was ready for sailing, and conveyed to the dungeons of Kussnach, as a violator of the respect due to imperial dignity.

No one was suffered to accompany Tell; but his little son clung to the bonds which were cutting the flesh of his father, and cried, that he would throw himself into the flood, if they tore him from him. Gessler's soldiers

had no objection to taking two victims instead of one, and yielded to the child's request, whom Amabel followed into the vessel without being questioned. The boy was her darling, and it was she who had conducted him to the fatal archery, where it was his destiny to play so principal a part. The cry that he was safe had rouzed her from the swoon into which the sight of his danger had thrown her; and she now found it impossible to part so soon from the cherub, whom she had expected never more to clasp to her bosom but as a corse. She had also no slight grounds for apprehending new dangers for the rescued victim, should she leave him in the hands of his enemies with no other

protector

protector than his captive father. Gessler's servile ministers could not have well pitched upon a more skilful or certain means of inflicting pain on Tell, than by murdering his son before his face.

Amabel was aware of this; and dreading lest this horrible plan of vengeance should occur to the soldiers, she took the first opportunity of enticing the child away from his father, and concealing him in a dark corner of the vessel. Here she charged the little William to remain quiet, and pointing to Tell, bade him observe how quiet his father was lying on the floor, his fettered hands clasped together and raised towards Heaven, whither his eyes directed

devout and imploring glances, which reached the Preserver of innocence above the clouds.

—"What is my father doing?" enquired the child at length in a whisper.

—"He is praying for himself and for us," answered Amabel.

—"Oh! then God will hear him, and help him; and then you know, we can creep out, and take away those ugly cords from his poor bleeding hands."—

Amabel replied in the manner, which she thought most likely to satisfy the child; and a conversation was carried on in whispers between her and her little companion which gradually became interesting enough to prevent their observing that a dreadful storm was rising,

that

that thick clouds had changed the day into night, and that the light vessel was forced far out of its intended course. The rolling of the thunder, the frequent flashes of lightning, and the heavy torrents of rain at length made both attentive and silent; till William proposed that he should steal o his father under covert of the thick larkness, and spread his little coat over- im, for Tell lay entirely exposed to the empest. Amabel burst into tears as he listened to the kind-hearted boy, hen gave him her own cloak, and bade im hasten to alleviate the prisoner's ufferings.

But Tell showed by no sign, that he vas conscious of this affecting testimony of

of his child's care: he remained with his hands clasped, and his eyes still fixed upon the heavens. Perhaps, the transactions of that day had blunted all his feelings; perhaps, he was revolving plans of escape, which never fail to occupy the thoughts of the captive hero, and whose future execution frequently prevent his being sensible of the weight of present calamities.

The tempest continued to rage: with every moment the danger of the slight vessel became more imminent. Tell, Amabel, and the child were now left by themselves. The other persons were employed in various quarters, endeavouring if possible to save the ship, which was already deprived of sail and mast.

mast. The prisoners were now the happiest of the party: they at least rejoiced in the hope of perishing together. The child too, who had no clear idea of the danger, and fancied that everything went wrong only because his father was in bonds, ceased not to exert all his little powers in endeavouring to untye the cords; but even with Amabel's assistance he found the task too difficult for his strength.

While they were still employed in this unavailing labour, they heard the cry of distress increase with tenfold violence: presently some one on the upper deck exclaimed—"Now then all is lost! What winds and waves have failed in doing, will be done by the hidden rocks which

which abound upon this coast, and with which not a soul of us is acquainted. Oh! what would I now give to be as good a pilot as Tell, and to possess his knowledge of these shores!"—

Amabel started up, and listened with more attention. She heard the name of Tell frequently mentioned; and after a few minutes past in contention, some of the sailors approached the place, where she stood by the side of her unfortunate friend.

—"Tell," said the Captain, "you know, that your life is forfeit to the law; but if you will engage to conduct the vessel safe to land, as a favour we will unbind you, and promise to do our utmost to obtain a milder sentence for you from the Emperor's mercy."—

—"I have

—"I have saved many a vessel," answered Tell, "in a more desperate situation than the present; and that which has succeeded with me ten times before, I trust, will not fail with me now.—As to what you say about favours, bestow them on those who ask them; I expect mercy from no one, save from Him under whose hand we all now tremble!"—

Tell was unbound, and the rudder committed to his care. William and Amabel still remained close by his side, while the rest of the ship's company dispersed to their several stations.

Tell's rudder seemed to command the tempest: he steered confidently through the foaming waves, and already the companions

companions of his danger shouted with joy at the certainty of their escape.

—"And what will be the reward of our preserver?" asked one of the most compassionate among Gessler's soldiers.

—"What *should* it be?" answered their leader angrily. "The most he can lay claim to is a speedy death without being previously tortured; or perhaps his sentence may be softened into that of eternal imprisonment."—

Tell was silent, and cast a despairing look through the dark clouds of the storm towards the Only-one, from whom he had hopes of assistance!

—"Oh! that I had no one here to tremble for, except myself!" said Tell to the afflicted Amabel, who knelt beside him

him after a silence of some minutes—"how quickly should I be safe from the malice of my enemies!"—

—"And what then would you do?"—

—"The rocks are not lofty! One bold and lucky spring, and I were in safety!"—

—"*Throw* me into the waves, father!" cried the boy, "throw me into the waves, for *I* am a hindrance to you!"—

At that moment a tremendous flash of lightning illuminated the whole scene. Tell descried an immense tree at a slight distance growing out of a rock which they were approaching, and extending its arms far over the foaming flood.

—"Ama-

"Amabel!" cried Tell, "dare you seize a bough of that tree as we pass under it, suffer the bark to be carried away from you, and cling fast to the branch, till I have time to come to your assistance?"—

—"I dare! I dare!" cried Amabel in the tone of desperation—"But the child! Oh! God! the child!"—

—"Be that my care!—Be prepared!—Now then!" he cried, and was obeyed. He saw that she had fast hold of the bough, and in the same moment he seized the boy with his left arm, with his right turned the rudder towards the rock, then sprang boldly from the deck, and left the vessel with its unthankful freight a prey to the raging

ing flood. The tempest seized it; rudder was broken in the shock, dreadful was the shriek of the r, as the fury of the winds and es drove it far away over the roar- billows. Tell sprang upon the rock urt; he hastily climbed up the upper of the coast, and having placed the on the ground, he flew to give abel his assistance. But she, who deficient neither in strength of body resence of mind, had already found ns to gain the rock in which the was rooted, had forced her way ugh all impediments, and had near- eached the loftiest of the broken s, before he could arrive. He assist- er to attain the summit, when she instantly

instantly sank on her knees, and returned thanks to God with all the joy of one just rescued from destruction.

But I forget, that Tell and Amabel are in fact foreign to my story, and I have already suffered myself to dwell on their adventures too long, to the prejudice of my real heroines. I will therefore pass over in silence the circumstances which followed their escape from the vessel, and those which again threw them into Gessler's power. Suffice it to say, that the dart which the Avenger of human nature seemed to have reserved for that express purpose, the dart which Tell had shown Gessler, in the first burst of his indignation, that very dart pierced the tyrant's bosom; and

and thus was Helvetia freed from a monster, who had laid waste her tranquil vallies with circumstances of much greater cruelty, than were ever attributed to fabled dragons in the Legends of Romance.

After performing this dangerous act of justice, Tell betook himself to Stein, where he intended to take refuge with Werner Bernsdorf. Here he found new cause to rejoice at having rid the world of Gessler. Bernsdorf's new-raised edifice, the admiration of the whole country, lay an heap of ashes! Gessler had thought it too good for a private man, and had threatened to pull it down. Werner laughed at his threats, for it seemed to be no trifle to destroy the property

property of a man of his consequence, while living in the midst of a neighbourhood, where every arm and every heart were devoted to his service: but he did not reflect, that villany can find a hundred secret means for effecting its purposes. In the depth of the night a fire broke out, which, from its bursting all at once from the four corners of the building, and at a time when all were buried in sleep, gained ground too rapidly to admit of its being got under. Werner and Gertrude saved nothing from the flames, except their lives. Every one exclaimed against secret incendiaries, and no one doubted by whose orders this shameful action had been committed: in fact, there were proofs

sufficient

sufficient to make it morally certain, that the author of this mischief could be no other than Gessler.

The sight of his friend's distress (for this fire had reduced Werner to beggary) raised Tell's indignation to the highest pitch. He left Amabel and his son to the care of Gertrude, and hastened with Bernsdorf in disguise back to Altdorf, to consult with Walter Forest and Henric Melthal on the best and speediest means of rescuing Helvetia from her disgraceful yoke. Arnold Melthal also, who had but lately escaped from the dungeons of the Abbot of St. Gall, increased their band; and the union of five men so remarkable for courage and for prudence produced such

fortunate and such glorious consequences, as will immortalize their names to the latest posterity *.

Bloomberg hastened to Stein, to rejoice with his wife at her escape, and to efface in her embraces the injurious impressions, to which his too easy heart had given way during their separation. Spite and Envy had not neglected the opportunity of calumniating one of Amabel's noblest actions. Her frank and guileless nature had prevented her from making it a secret, that the admirable William Tell had been the first love of her innocent heart; and her voluntary forsaking her family, in order

* Bernsdorf's real name was Staufacher.

that

that she might share the fate of that gallant prisoner (a circumstance of which all Altdorf had been an eye-witness) had found that misinterpretation, which Calumny is always so eager to bestow on those heroic actions, of which she feels erself incapable.

Fortunately the heart of Edmund Bloomberg was not more prone to jealous doubts, than open to conviction. Nothing more than the sight of his excellent brother, and the relation of the true circumstances of the case, was necessary to make him feel the folly of suspecting the integrity of such a man. He requested his lovely wife to forgive his unjust suspicions; and the temporary separation of their hearts seemed

to have renewed his former love with such violence, that he could not resolve to tear himself away from her, in spite of his earnest desire to participate with his friends in the glorious attempt to rescue Helvetia from her chains.

Yet was not Edmund entirely idle. His wife's anxiety respecting the Damsels of Sargans had formerly induced him to make enquiries respecting their fate; but Wolfenrad (whose sole view was to remove the husband, in order that the unprotected wife might fall a prey during his absence) had taken care to direct his search, where he well knew that it must be fruitless. Edmund at length discovered the trick, and incensed at having been sent on such a wild-

wild-goose-chase, he hastened back accompanied by a band of well-armed companions, determined to revenge the insult. His vengeance was complete, and now at Amabel's request he again resumed his search after the Damsels of Sargans: nor was it long before he ascertained, that report had said no more than the truth, when she asserted that Amalberga was a captive in the dungeons of Rassburg, and that Emmeline had really perished among the flames. To rescue the one and to revenge the other now formed the only subject of the conversations, which passed between Gertrude, Amabel, and her husband.

The more they discussed the circum-

stances, the more dreadful did the fate of the two sisters appear, and the more difficult of execution did they find their plans respecting them. They were conscious, that without some powerful supporter, their strength was insufficient for the undertaking; and Annabel's thoughts immediately suggested to her the names of two young knights, to whom at a former period the Damsels of Sargans had been by no means indifferent, and who (she doubted not) would still feel so much interest about them, as to forward her wish to avenge the death of the one and procure the deliverance of the other.

On enquiry, it appeared, that but few hopes could be grounded upon the aid

of

of Count Herman of Werdenberg. Suspicions, injurious to Emmeline's character, had made him resolve to conquer his passion for her: but to eradicate her from his heart had not been found a task so easy, as he imagined; and at length he had quitted Germany, tormented by his unsatisfied love, and by anger at himself for not having succeeded in overcoming it. He was at this time in England, whence his relations had solicited his return most earnestly, but in vain.

But little as was to be expected from Count Herman, so much the more was to be hoped from the noble Eginhart of Torrenburg, and it was resolved that Edmund should hasten to him without

delay: it was not long before he returned accompanied by the youthful hero.

There are reasons, which it is unnecessary to disclose, which make it particularly painful to me to trace the name of Torrenburg, and to recollect how closely his fate is interwoven with that of Amalberga of Sargans: but it must be done, and I will not complain. Yes, there ought to be now no sacrifice too difficult for my heart to make: there *shall* be none!

Eginhart of Torrenburg, who had formerly been as closely bound to Helen of Homburg through motives of policy, as he was now attached by affection and his own choice to the lovely Amalberga, was at length free from his engagements

to

to the former, and at liberty to bestow his hand according to the dictates of his heart.

Helen (alas for that poor Helen!) had been carried off on her bridal-day by that fierce terrific tyrant, Donat, Count of Carlsheim and Sargans: force had compelled her to become his wife! Angels of innocence, where were you then lingering, that you gave the unfortunate no warning-sign of the danger, into which she was on the brink of falling? Yet scarcely can I decide, which would have been the harder fate; to become the victim of Count Donat, or with a heart glowing with love to be delivered into the arms of a husband, whose soul was in secret devoted to another, and

whose hand was only given to the wretched Helen from motives of honour and respect for his plighted word.

Instead of the expected bride, the news of her being carried off reached the Castle of Torrenburg, where the wedding was to have been celebrated. Though love had no share in his concern on this occasion, compassion for the unfortunate girl, and the insult thus offered to himself, made the young Count immediately place himself at the head of his vassals, and hasten to rescue the intended victim from Donat's clutches.

Helen, who had been compelled to assent to this unhallowed union at the Castle of Upper Halbstein, was now or-

dered to follow her unamiable Lord to another of his fortresses situated southwards among the Rhœtian Alps. She received the command with joy, for at the Castle of Sargans she hoped at least to receive the consolations of friendship. Her step-daughters had been the play-fellows of Helen's childhood during several weeks; and since their separation occasional letters and messages conveyed by third persons had frequently assured her, that she still lived in the remembrances of her early friends. In their embraces she hoped to find some alleviation of her sufferings: she flattered herself also, that the station which she was now to fill in their house, would give her frequent oppor-

tunities of making the situation of the poor girls more happy than it had been hitherto; and this reflexion prevented her from feeling herself quite miserable.

Cruel fate decreed, that her journey, which was made in company with her husband and under the protection of a numerous retinue, should be interrupted by the arrival of the Count of Torrenburg and his forces. It was now, that for the first time she saw the bridegroom, whom fortune had destined never to be hers; for whose character she had ever been taught to entertain the highest admiration; and whose sight (for oh! there never yet was man more formed to captivate the soul of woman) was sufficient to make her feel, how near her

happiness

happiness had been, and how completely it was now lost to her for ever.

Torrenburg's valour forced Count Donat to seek his safety in flight, and the trembling Helen was brought before the conqueror. Helen (who believed herself to be no less dear to her destined bridegroom, than He was dear to Her) for a few moments forgot her duty; but melancholy reflexion soon made her tear herself away from the embraces of the beloved warrior, and she commanded him to leave her.

—"My rescue comes too late!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands in agony; "I am Count Donat's wife, and must remain so, though it should break my heart! Oh! Eginhart, restore me

to

to my husband, and forget the unfortunate, whom fate has separated from you for ever."—

Tears stood glittering in the warrior's eyes. He advanced, as if he would have detained her, but she peremptorily forbade his nearer approach. She hastened to her palfrey, and giving the reins to the animal, she soon reached the valley, whither Donat and his vassals had directed their flight.

Helen's conduct on this occasion, which might well have been termed a difficult effort, if virtue and duty did not make every effort easy, was rewarded by her stern husband with coldness, with sarcasms, with reproaches. She arrived at Sargans; and here was

Helen

Helen destined to find the disappointment of her last poor promised pleasure, the society of her two friends.

Count Donat held out to her as a mark of his complaisance and of his consideration for her happiness, that he had ordered the only one of his daughters who remained to him (for the other had unaccountably disappeared) to quit the Castle. In vain did Helen implore him to recall Emmeline of Sargans from the Sanctuary of St. Roswitha: he was deaf to her entreaties, and she was left a prey to solitude and despair.

Nor had the husband, who had gained her hand by such unworthy means, reason to be entirely satisfied with

with his situation. The Counts of Torrenburg, Mayenfield, and Homburg, mortally offended at the carrying off of Helen, like a deluge over-ran with their forces the territories of Count Donat. His fortresses were forced and plundered one after another, and they now advanced to attack the Castle of Sargans. But Helen, whose only remaining consolation was derived from the most punctilious discharge of her duties, came forth to throw herself at the feet of her relations; and she implored for peace so fervently and so earnestly, and she asserted with so much solemnity her belief, that being once become the Count of Carlsheim's wife, it was her duty to live and die with him, (a duty, which she

she was resolved to fulfill, whatever might be the consequences,) that her intercession was found irresistible. Dearly was Helen beloved by her parents; earnestly did they desire her happiness, which they well knew she never could find in the arms of Donat: but it was by themselves, that she had been taught the merit of sacrificing all other considerations to that of fulfilling her duties; how then could they advise her now to break through the rules, which they had themselves laid down for her? —Peace was granted, and granted solely to Helen's intercession. The ravisher was left in possession of his unwilling bride; and her relations quitted his territories, having first exacted from him

him the most solemn and dreadful oath to recompense her for the happy station, of which he had deprived her, by unchanging love and never-ceasing anxiety for her welfare.

Donat took the oath: how he kept it, is a secret to all save the Almighty and Helen: but she has sworn in the presence of God to be silent on this subject, and she will carry that dreadful secret with her to the grave unpublished.

She was very.... oh! *very* miserable! On those days only, when her stern husband was from home, had she any gleams of sunshine. On one of these days an unknown messenger arrived, and desired to speak with the Lady Emmeline of Sargans. He was informed

formed, that she was not at the Castle, and he was conducted to Helen. He brought letters from the Lake of Thun, which he at length confided to her, though unwillingly, and only (as he said) induced by the frank expression of her countenance.

—"But," said he, "will you deliver them to the Lady Emmeline with your own hands?"—

Helen, who lived at Sargans almost in a state of captivity, knew too well that she was not authorised to give such a promise, and only answered by a melancholy shake of the head. Her look, the suspicious countenances of the attendants, and the well-known character of her husband, alarmed the messenger,

senger, and made him suspect that his life was in danger: he stole unperceived to the gate, and hastened away. The packet was thus left in Helen's possession. She knew, that it would be impossible to deliver it into the hands of her, for whom it was intended; she long sought for opportunities of doing so in vain; and at length ennui, and her anxiety to obtain some further information respecting the Sisters, which might possibly furnish her with the means of alleviating their cruel destiny, induced her to open the letters.

They were from Amabel Melthal and the lost Amalberga. Heavens! what unexpected discoveries did Helen make while perusing them; discoveries, which

which had no slight connexion with her own situation! God be thanked, that among other things they made it known to her, that nothing but duty to his parents, and consideration for his plighted word, had induced Eginhart of Torrenburg to offer her his hand, while every fond sentiment of his heart had long been Amalberga's. This discovery at first wounded her to the very soul; but after a time she drew from it reasons for being better satisfied with her fate, and she resolutely banished the beloved youth from her memory, in which till then he had too frequently occupied a place.

Determined to abstract herself entirely from every thing which regarded herself,

herself, Helen now determined to consider the happiness of her two friends as her only object in life. She endeavoured to make herself mistress of every circumstance belonging to them. Mention was made in one of Amabel's letters of an old maid-servant at Sargans, called Bertha, who had been Emmeline's confidante during the latter days of her abode at her father's mansion; and in hopes of gaining some further information Helen desired, that Bertha might be brought before her. She was answered, that the old woman had been sick for several weeks, and was now drawing near her end. To the great astonishment of the domestics Helen immediately hastened to Bertha's chamber, saying,

ing, that she would go and comfort her in her last moments.

Helen had but little time allowed her to perform this charitable office: yet that little she employed to the best advantage, and in return Bertha's gratitude rewarded her more amply, than she had hoped. Bertha, who had fallen ill soon after Emmeline's departure, had only had time to forward the letter for Amabel; another packet, intended for the Countess Urania Venosta, was still in her possession. She gave it to Helen, and implored her to take care, that it reached its destination. That was not in Helen's power; she kept it for some time, in constant terror lest her tyrant husband should discover it,

and

and lest it should be the means of drawing down on herself and Emmeline fresh anger and increased sufferings. At length, she resolved at least to put the contents out of Count Donat's power to bury in oblivion: she broke the seal, and what she read exalted her impatience to rescue the unfortunate writer to a degree, that was almost too strong to admit of concealment.

What Helen suffered at this period is not to be expressed; perhaps her own misfortunes had made her still more compassionate towards those of others, than it was her nature otherwise to be. Three objects were now never out of her thoughts for a moment. The first was, since the Count of Torrenburg

was

was now lost to her for ever, to make known to him the present residence of Amalberga; but how to convey to him that intelligence, she in vain sought to discover. The second was, if possible, to rescue Emmeline from the detested Convent of St. Roswitha; but alas! she had but little hopes of delivering others, while she was herself a captive in the Castle of Sargans. The last was, to obtain possession of the key to that chamber, in which was the secret entrance to the subterraneous passages leading to the dwellings of the Anchorets.

The last seemed to afford her the most probable means of gratifying her two former wishes; perhaps too, she

was unconsciously desirous of securing a means of escaping from the Castle, should she ever find such a step necessary. It is at least certain, that in her eagerness to carry her point, she took many steps, which prudence would not justify. Frequently did she repair to that chamber; she found the door guarded by seven locks. Frequently in the dead of the night, when all slept, or seemed to sleep, did she try the house-keys, which were in her charge; and when at length two of the locks shot back from their fastenings, she sank on her knees, and thanked Heaven with a flood of tears. She doubted not, that the rest of the locks would yield to her perseverance; but a sudden noise at no

great

great distance prevented her from pushing the attempt farther that night, and she hastened back to her chamber with a heart filled with delight and expectation.

Joy, at being so near the accomplishment of her wishes, prevented her from sleeping during the remainder of the night, and she employed the vacant hours in revolving her future plans.

—"If," said she to herself, after giving the matter her most serious consideration; "if I should be so fortunate as to obtain an entrance into the mysterious chamber to-morrow night, I will hasten to the subterraneous passage without losing a moment. A torch, and the clear description of the way

given in Amalberga's letter will guide me to the Hermitage to a certainty, and I need only use more than ordinary diligence, in order to be back at the Castle before day-break; for precious as liberty appears to me, I will not obtain it by improper means. I am Donat's wife, and privately to withdraw myself from his protection were to commit an act of infidelity and treason against my husband. I will content myself therefore with relating what I know to the good hermits, and entreating them to take the best and speediest means of rescuing Enmeline from her dangerous abode, and for placing the fortunate Amalberga in the arms of Torrenburg!"—

On

On second thoughts, she reflected, that merely to give this intelligence to the hermits would not be to do enough; it would also be necessary to give some explanation to the Countess Urania respecting the letters which she had opened, and by advising Torrenburg to make Amalberga his wife, to render it clear to him, that she had herself forgotten the tyes which once existed between them. Perhaps too, a threatening letter to the Abbot of Curwald (should all other means fail) might have some weight in inducing him to surrender Emmeline. In order that nothing might delay her on the ensuing night, she rose instantly from her bed, and began to write. But be-

fore her letters were concluded, it was morning, and her attendants, or rather her jailors, entered the apartment to wake her. They exprest no little surprise at finding her already out of bed.

—"I presume, noble Lady," said the eldest of them, "either some joyous foreboding, or some prophetic dream has roused you from your couch so early. Our Lord will return to-day; in truth, we knew this yesterday, but we kept it to make our morning-greeting the more welcome, and also through apprehension lest your joy at this intelligence should spoil your night's rest."—

Helen only answered the speaker by one of those expressive glances, with which

which the open-hearted repay words, which belie the secret mind. She was well aware, that her women who had been so often the witnesses of her sufferings, could not but know the nature of those feelings, which Donat's return was likely to excite in her bosom. Nor did she alone tremble in the presence of the fierce Count of Carlsheim; every creature that existed in the Castle listened to his name with terror, and nothing but irony had dictated this speech of the insolent Jutta. Yet dared not Helen find the least fault with any one of her female attendants, who were chiefly composed of her husband's former favourites, and the meanest of whom had more influence with him still, than was allowed to his unhappy wife.

The news of Donat's return was soon confirmed: it was scarcely mid-day, when she heard the drawbridge resounding beneath the hasty trampling of his black steed. She hastened to receive him at the gate with that smile of submissive duty, which she had accustomed herself always to wear in his presence. He repulsed her offered hand with a furious look, and shut himself up in his own chamber with such of his dependents, as were most in his confidence. An hour elapsed; his chamber-door was thrown open, and Donat rushed out again, to all appearance more incensed, if possible, than before.

—"Arm! arm!" cried he with a voice of thunder, which resound-

ed

ed through the whole fortress, and which soon collected all his soldiers around him, who, wearied with the journey from which they were just returned, were better fitted for repose than for a second expedition; " to horse, and away this instant; business of importance summons us, and which admits of no delay. Talk not of weariness, or exhausted strength! the deed, which now demands your faulchions, could be executed, if your arms were half useless; for I lead you not against stout warriors, but cowardly monks, on whom I swear to be revenged before sun-set!"—

They were too well accustomed to obey Count Donat at the first motion

of his finger, to make any remonstrances. In a few minutes all were mounted, and their horses galloped over the echoing draw-bridge into the valley below, whence they disappeared from the eyes of those, who gazed after them, with the rapidity of lightning.

The Castle-inhabitants looked on each other in silent astonishment. The similarity of their present feelings produced a kind of confidence between the Countess and her women; and one of them confessed to her, her being almost certain, that she knew the cause of all this uproar. She would however only impart thus much of her knowledge: on his return homewards the Count had received a letter from

one who was in the habit of sending him intelligence, and this letter most probably contained the spark, which had kindled such flames in the bosom of Count Donat; for as soon as he had read it to his confidents, he tore it in a thousand pieces, and trampled it under his feet. Besides this, in the midst of a torrent of execrations he had been heard to mention the Abbot of Curwald and his daughter Emmeline.

—"Emmeline and the Abbot?" exclaimed Helen delighted. "Is it possible, that some benevolent Being should have opened his eyes to the miseries of his daughter? Is it to rescue her, that he departed in such haste? Ah! then why have I so long delayed to take the

[illegible] for effecting her [illegible] but confest her [illegible] Surely the [illegible] endure, that [illegible] overwhelmed in [illegible] depravity of the [illegible] must have been [illegible] or he [illegible] daughter a [illegible]"—

[illegible] which were only [illegible] by Helen, were totally [illegible] her attendants, who [illegible] what has past, and [illegible] to follow; this [illegible] that they [illegible] their mistress had [illegible] she had listened to her husband's

husband's chamber, where she hoped to obtain some insight into the circumstance, which at once both rejoiced and alarmed her.

The fragments of the important letter still lay upon the floor; she eagerly seized them, and having secured herself against interruption, put them again together carefully. She learned from them the truth of what she had just been told; the writer warned Count Donat to beware of the Abbot's artifices; discovered to him, that St. Roswitha's Sanctuary was little better than the harem of the Monks of Curwald; and that by enclosing the Lady Emmeline within these sacrilegious walls, he had delivered up his daughter to the passion of her licentious lover.

No

No wonder, that information like this should have given a deadly wound to Count Donat's pride: nor (in spite of his own excesses) was he so totally lost to shame as to endure patiently, that his daughter should become the prey of a libertine. He was almost frantic with rage, and for the first time in his life he drew his sword to punish the insulters of virtue.

Helen sank on her knees, and thanked God for this unexpected accomplishment of her wishes. She sent a thousand prayers after her husband for the good success of his expedition: she even went so far, as to begin to make preparations for receiving the rescued Emmeline, whom in fancy she already

prest

prest to her heart; and when this agreeable occupation was finished, she turned her thoughts towards guessing at the benevolent writer of the letter, which had induced the father to hasten to preserve his child.

Poor simple Helen! it entered not into her thoughts (and it was not till long after, that she made the discovery) that villainy often performs a seemingly virtuous action, in order to forward its own unholy designs. She knew not, that the author of that letter was Wolfenrad. It seems, that those oppressors of Rhœtian and Helvetian liberty, the lord governors and their assistants, carried on a very close though secret understanding with some of the most potent

tent noblemen, whose object it was equally to bring the inhabitants of these unfortunate countries still more beneath the yoke, and to build upon their subjection the fabric of their own power and grandeur. Among the secret allies of Gessler and Landenberg, Count Donat and the Abbot of Curwald were the most distinguished; and Wolfenrad on account of his well-known skill in penmanship was frequently employed by both the governors to carry on their correspondence both with Curwald and Sargans.

Still the fact was, that neither of these parties meant honestly to each other. Donat and the Abbot were determined only to go hand in hand with the

the vice-gerents so long, as it suited their own views; and *these* on the other side intended, as soon as they had derived as much benefit as they could from the assistance of the Count and his ecclesiastical ally, to excite a quarrel between them, and then join with the one in plundering the other.

We have already seen, how imprudently Amabel had laid her secrets open to Wolfenrad. Her letters to Emmeline passed through his hands, and he missed not this opportunity to increase his knowledge of the affairs of the Count of Carlsheim; and though Emmeline's letters to Amabel were not *confided* to him, by one artifice or another he had not failed to obtain a sight of them.

Bloom-

Bloomberg's simple wife observed indeed, that the seal of Emmeline's packet had been forced; but she little guest by whom.

The contents of this letter immediately furnished him with the most certain means for producing an irreconcileable hatred between Count Donat and the potent Abbot of Curwald. The power of the latter was beginning to appear dangerous to the Lord Governors; but they could expect nothing but an accession of strength to themselves, while the Count of Carlsheim and the Abbot were mutually weakening themselves in feudal skirmishes. Such was Wolfenrad's object in writing this warning-letter, whose author was loaded with

with blessings by the unsuspicious Helen, while waiting with a throbbing heart for the return of her Lord.

The night arrived. She now thought no longer of attempting to open the door of the mysterious chamber, which she had meant to attempt at this hour, since a principal object of her wish to visit the Hermitage was already accomplished. Besides, the design could not then have been possibly executed, since every one in the Castle was still awake, and waiting with impatience for Count Donat's return.

It was almost morning, when some of her attendants rushed with looks of terror into Helen's apartment, and entreated her to ascend the upper platform,

form, whence she would discern towards the west indubitable marks of some dreadful conflagration.

—" God preserve us from some mishap!" exclaimed Helen, while she followed her women to the battlements; the whole quarter of the heavens towards Curwald seemed one blaze of red!—" Oh! Donat, Donat, what hast thou done? Were there no gentler means?—Emmeline, my poor Emmeline, where art thou at this moment?"—

Helen's fears were but too well-founded. Donat, in doing what he thought it right to do, had done it in his usual manner. Wolfenrad's letter had given him some hints of the midnight revels, which were frequently carried

l on between the inhabitants of the
acent Convents of Curwald and St.
switha. He made enquiries of the
ghbouring peasants, who were no
ends of these ecclesiastical libertines;
ir report confirmed the truth of
olfenrad's assertions; and an old man
ho declared himself particularly well
ormed respecting these disgraceful
rets) added—" that on that very
ht there was to be a superb entertain-
nt given to celebrate the conversion
a Nun, who was the last admit-
."—

—" You may easily guess, valiant
ght," continued the old man, " what
y mean by her *conversion.* I suppose
lady (I saw her brought into the
Convent

Convent myself, and she seemed to be an angel of innocence and beauty) was a little violent at first; and so they have at last succeeded in taming her stern morality, as many another has been tamed in the same way before her."—

—"Good heavens!" exclaimed one of the least depraved among Count Donat's knights; "are such things spoken of in these parts so openly, and yet is Justice silent, and does the Bishop of Coira take no notice of such abominations?"—

—"Oh! the Lord have mercy on me, Sir Knight," answered the old man, "such things are not talked of *openly*, or so many fathers would not plunge

plunge their children into yonder abyss of infamy! I warrant you, the parents of this converted damsel little thought, when they sent her to St. Roswitha, that they were placing the sweet creature in Satan's own claws. But when one is speaking to gallant warriors like yourselves, who are able, and perhaps willing to help us, one must be open-hearted. I see that you are all well-armed, and yonder tall gentleman with his eye-brows bent so sternly and his hands clenched seems to feel for what we poor country-folks must suffer under the dominion of these voluptuous Monks, who make us contribute the chief part of our hard-earned gains to the support of their luxury. As to the

Bishop

Bishop of Coira.... I am afraid, you are in the right about him! The notice which *he* takes.... Aye; were old Hugo of Werdenberg still bishop indeed.... But the present Bishop.... Well! well! he and his boon-companion, the Abbot of St. Gall, make a pair of worthies indeed!"—

While his knights were carrying on this discourse with the peasants, their Lord, whom fury had almost deprived of his senses, was considering what was to be done: the resolution which he took was worthy of his character, was worthy of no one but himself. Entrance into either of the two convents was demanded in vain; every other proposal which his attendants suggested, was

as rejected as incompetent to effect s object; at length his commands re obeyed, and by midnight St. switha's Sanctuary was enveloped in mes. It's true, that a spark of pater- l love still glimmered in his heart for unfortunate Emmeline; but the a, that in all probability *she* also had en *converted* after the fashion of the terhood, soon extinguished it, and resolved to hide her and his shame gether in the ashes of St. Roswitha. pressed with this idea—"Drive them ck into the flames!" roared the inhu- an Donat, whenever either Friar or Nun ed to rescue themselves from the con- gration, without deigning to examine hether Emmeline might not be one of

those unfortunates. The number of monks, whom the flames compelled to attempt their escape from St. Roswitha at this undue time of night, confirmed the reports of the mode of life practised in the convents; and the dresses of the Nuns, who had been arrayed for the feast, proclaimed how little their hearts were estranged from worldly vanities. The fire continued to spread; it now caught the adjacent Abbey of Curwald, and before day-break there remained of both the Sanctuaries and their infamous inhabitants nothing but heaps of smoaking ruins *.

* Some historians date the burning of Cloister-Curwald several years later than the period adopted in this narrative.

Such

Such was the cause of those flames, whose reflexion on the sky excited so much consternation at Sargans; Helen's heart had not throbbed with sad forebodings without necessity. In the course of the morning Donat returned home, and returned without Emmeline!

Helen flew to meet him, and eagerly enquired, where was his daughter? His answer was a short and cold narrative of the dreadful transaction, which had just taken place, and the consequence was, that overpowered with horror Helen fell senseless at the monster's feet. When she recovered, her first words were to ask, where he had placed Emmeline, (for she doubted not,

that previous to firing the Convent he had provided for his daughter's safety,) and unfortunately her question was so worded, that it betrayed her more intimate knowledge of the business, than was by any means suspected by Donat. This discovery converted his unfeeling coldness into a degree of fury, that nearly approached delirium. He seized her roughly by the arm, and demanded, in a voice of thunder, how she came to be so well acquainted with his affairs? The unfortunate knew no other way of extricating herself from this dilemma, than repeating what she had heard mentioned by one of her attendants respecting Wolfenrad's letter, which (she confest) had so strongly excited her anxiety

about Emmeline, that she had not scrupled to piece the fragments again together. The storm of rage was now diverted from Helen to the woman, who had given her mistress this intelligence, and who had it in her power to disclose much more important secrets, if she had thought proper.

Incensed at Count Donat's ill-treatment of her, for which she considered herself as indebted to Helen, Jutta resolved to disclose in her turn all that she thought most likely to injure her mistress. Accordingly she began an accusation, which among a thousand falsehoods contained some truths, calculated to make Helen shudder as she listened to them.

The Countess (Jutta said) had some time before received a packet from an unknown messenger, who afterwards quitted the Castle with all speed, and whose arrival she ordered to be concealed from her husband. She had also received several letters from the hands of the dying Bertha; after reading which she had been frequently seen loitering about the door of that chamber, which (on account of the strange noises frequently heard within) was supposed to be haunted. Nay, on the night before last she had actually tried to force back the locks, but had been scared away, by hearing Jutta's rosary fall on the ground, while she was watching her Lady's proceedings concealed behind

hind St. Martin's statue. She had afterwards seen through the key-hole the Countess busily employed in writing, and during the confusion which followed Count Donat's arrival, had found means to get the letters into her possession; which to confirm her story Jutta was now ready to lay before him.

These heavy charges against Helen failed not to produce the effect intended. Donat ordered the letters to be brought immediately: He was no scholar; yet was he not so totally deficient in the knowledge of writing, but that he could clearly decypher the addresses, which were written in large characters. His eyes flashed fire, while he spelt the names of "Eginhart of

Torrenburg," "the Abbot of Curwald," and "Urania Venosta, the widowed Countess of Carlsheim and Sargans." These directions would have been sufficient to condemn the poor Helen, even had she been tried by a more impartial judge. It was certain, that these three persons were her husband's bitterest enemies; with what propriety then could she be engaged in a secret correspondence with them? In particular, what motive could she have for writing to the Count of Torrenburg, who was her former lover, and had been so long her destined bridegroom? Alas! poor Helen! appearances were sorely against thee! Nor would Donat's fury give him time to enquire further into the business.

business. In a paroxysm of rage he tore the letters into a thousand fragments, and pronounced Helen to be in a secret correspondence with his implacable foe, the Countess Urania for the purpose of betraying him to his enemies; he asserted also, that she had been privy to the Abbot's designs upon his daughter, and had encouraged them in order to be revenged on the father; and that she was still in love with the Count of Torrenburg and meant to have fled to him from Sargans, an intention which was sufficiently proved by her midnight efforts to obtain entrance into that chamber, which concealed a private outlet from the Castle. It's true, that finding Emmeline had quitted that chamber of

her own accord, and thinking the knowledge of the secret passage might be of use to himself on some future occasion, the Abbot had not mentioned to Count Donat his suspicions, that such a passage existed; and the room had been merely shut up from the report of its being haunted. But Wolfenrad had learned this secret from the perusal of Amalberga's letter to Emmeline, and had communicated it to the Count, hoping thereby to increase the merit of his services. Now then Donat had no doubt, that the noises, which had been heard in that chamber, proceeded from no ghosts, but from persons who were waiting to assist his wife in her projected flight. Under the influence of these

impressions, Helen was held convicted of the most infamous designs, and condemned to suffer the most exemplary chastisement. She was instantly confined in one of the strongest dungeons, probably in that where Urania had shed so many tears; in the mean while her tyrant with his confidents and those women of the Castle who were most her enemies, sat in council to decide, what punishment would be sufficiently severe to suit her crime.

I am in doubt as to Donat's reasons for not immediately proceeding to the last extremities with his wife: that sentiment towards her, which he had chosen to dignify with the name of love, had long ago disappeared; and

his late atrocious act, which had prove
the destruction of the whole Orders
Curwald and St. Roswitha, had le
him no scruples to overcome. O
murder more or less, what did that si
nify to a man, who had arrived at
dreadful a height of guilt?—The mo
probable cause for Donat's moderati
was, *fear*. Helen was the Count
Homburg's daughter; was niece to t
Count of Mayenfield; and had been
fianced to the Count of Torrenbur
who it was well known, would not su
fer her to be injured with impunit
These considerations made Donat he
tate, as to the course which he was n
to pursue.

Donat past two days in resolvin
wheth

whether it would not be possible to bring Helen to confess herself guilty. This would justify him in the eyes of her relations for any severity, which he might think proper to inflict upon her; but when he considered his wife's character, he saw little prospect of persuading her to declare herself infamous. In the mean while Helen was suffered to remain tranquil in her dungeon; and her husband was still meditating how to avoid the vengeance of her friends, when the Castle was unexpectedly attacked by enemies incensed upon a different account. He might indeed have foreseen, that the Bishop of Coira would not pass over the destruction of Cloister-Curwald in silence; occupied however

however by his anger against Helen, Donat had bestowed no thought upon the Bishop; and the avengers of the Monks of Curwald were at the gates of Sargans, before any one had even bestowed a thought on the possibility of such an attack.

Helen heard from her prison the noise of the assault, the shouts of the victors, and the expiring groans of those who fell beneath their swords; but her spirit was too much broken to enable her to guess at what was passing, or to offer up prayers or wishes for the success of either party. She lay almost in a state of insensibility, when the door of her dungeon was thrown open. The Count of Carlsheim entered, snatched her rudely

rudely from the earth, and more by gestures than speech, commanded her attendance. She followed her conductor in silence, like a lamb to the slaughter; he saw, that she was scarcely able to move through weakness, and either out of compassion or cruelty compelled her to swallow a cordial. She gradually recovered herself sufficiently to remark, that her husband was habited like a pilgrim on the point of setting out on some long journey, and that he guided her towards a part of the Castle remote from the clamour of the combat. Here they found a domestic waiting with a torch, who in a low voice and with few words assured his Lord, that the passage was still safe. A door, artfully

fully concealed in the wall, was now unlocked, and Helen was commanded to ascend the stair-case, which presented itself before her.

She was too weak, too hopeless, to think it worth while to make any reflections on Donat's unaccountable conduct in regaining the upper apartments of the fortress, (which, she was convinced, was already in the enemy's possession,) instead of employing these precious moments to effect his escape. They now arrived at the door of that chamber, which concealed the entrance to the subterraneous passages: the touch of a single key was sufficient to make all the seven locks fly back. Donat entered, and compelled his unhappy wife

wife to follow him; he then took the torch from the domestic, and commanded him to execute his orders without delay, and then to provide for his own safety. The servant bowed, and retired.

Now then Helen was at length in that very spot, which she had so anxiously wished to visit, but not with such a companion. Donat paused for a moment; and she could hear distinctly, that the domestic fastened the door through which she had entered, not omitting a single lock. Her tyrant left her no time for reflecting on the purpose for which she had been conducted hither; he hastened to unclose the secret door which led to Urania's baths,

baths, dragged her through it, and commanded her to proceed, ha first taken care to fasten the door : him.

Helen obeyed, and as she mo slowly forwards, through the sul vaneous passages, she observed that husband occasionally examined the walls with his hand or foot. At ler he stopped before a small door half s in the ground; he forced it open v a violence which shook the whole vern, and held his torch within, in der to examine it.

—" Yes, yes!" said he, " this is Found in good time!—Helen, retu or canst thou find the way thro these vaults without assistance?"—

She dragged her feeble steps towa hi

him: he grasped her arm, and dashed her with violence down a few steps terminating in a small cave. She sank on the ground with a shriek of pain, which her tyrant answered by a burst of diabolical laughter.

—"Here, traitress!" he exclaimed; "here is the place of your punishment and your perdition; and here is the last nourishment, which you shall ever receive on this side the grave. I give it not out of compassion, but that you may not perish in your present state of stupor, and thus escape the sense of what I have doomed you to suffer.—Eat! revive to the full consciousness of your misery; then die in agony, as others have died here before you!"—

Thus

Thus saying, he placed by her side a loaf of bread and a small flask of water, which he had brought with him in his pilgrim's scrip. She was not in a condition to make him any answer, and listened in morbid silence, while he quitted the cave, flinging the door after him with violence, and carefully barricading it on the outside to prevent her escape.

Nothing now animated the frame of Helen but mere animal life; and even that was half extinguished by the shock which she had sustained the day before and by long abstinence from all nourishment. She was scarcely conscious of what had past, and it afterwards cost her no little difficulty to recall the recollection

collection of it. Instinct made her seize eagerly the food, of which she had so long been deprived; and the relief, which this afforded her, was the first thing, which brought her to herself, and gave her spirits to ask the question—"What has happened to me? Whither have I been conveyed?"—She thought, that she must be the sport of some fantastic vision, and with the sensation of being totally exhausted she closed her eyes, and endeavoured to end her dream.

A violent shock, which made the hollow ground tremble beneath her, forced her to start up in terror; and she now had strength and recollection sufficient to rush forward a few paces,

which

which brought her to the steps, down which Count Donat had so lately dashed her. An instant after she was sensible of a second shock like that of an earthquake, and which was accompanied by a noise so loud, that for a few moments she was completely stunned. On recovering herself, she was sensible of a strong current of air blowing into the cave: her heart beat violently with hope and fear, while she thought it possible, that the late earthquake might have forced the dungeon open. She hastened up the steps, and with rapture ascertained by the touch that the door had been driven from its fastenings, and that nothing prevented her from quitting her prison. With as much speed, as her extreme

weakness

weakness and the total obscurity would permit, she hastened to profit by this interposition of Providence. She crept along slowly and cautiously, when on turning a corner she perceived a distant gleam of light. With increased hopes she made the best of her way towards it, and found, that it proceeded from Count Donat's torch, as it lay half extinguished in the rubbish, among which it had fallen.

Without giving herself time to guess, what motive could have induced her husband to throw away his only guide through the gloom, or how he could have found his way out of these intricate passages without its aid, she caught it eagerly from the ground, cleared the wick

wick from the dust with which it was clogged, and made the flame burn brightly; while she frequently cast a look of anxiety round her, lest some one should be advancing to rob her of this invaluable prize. This apprehension made her proceed with still greater exertion of speed; but she had not gone far, before her way was barred by large heaps of stones and earth: she fancied too, that she heard a faint murmur at no great distance, like some one groaning. She stopped; she listened; it struck her, that from beneath a pile of stones, which seemed to have lately fallen down, there came a voice, whose accents were familiar to her; but before she could recover herself from the horror

error, which this idea occasioned her sufficiently to ascertain the truth of her suspicions, a third shock, similar to the two first, but if possible more violent and terrible, overpowered her faculties so completely, that she sank upon the earth, unable to move for several minutes. Fortunately her torch was not extinguished by her fall. She rose; the way, so lately open before her, was now completely blocked up by the earth, which had fallen in; and it seemed to her in the first moments of terror, that she saw the roof tottering above, and felt the ground giving way beneath her. Fear gave her strength, and she fled hastily down a side passage, which accident presented to her, nor rested,

till she thought, that the place, which sl had reached, was not totally unknow to her. She stopped, and looking dow discovered lying on the earth, torn fro its hinges, and considerably shattere the low door of that dungeon, whic Donat had destined for her grave.

She now exerted her whole strengt to pass onwards, without falling into a enormous chasm, which had been forme by the late convulsion, and which o cupied almost the whole breadth of tl passage. She shuddered, as she r marked, that the earth had fallen in the dungeon, and would infallibly hav smothered her, had she remained the but a few minutes longer.

She reached the opposite side of tl chas

chasm with much difficulty, but unhurt. She was now certain, that the Castle was at no great distance: but she dreaded either to miss the proper road, or to find it rendered impassable by earth and rubbish. Should either happen, she had no alternative left but perishing of hunger in these frightful dungeons: nor had she much time left her for deliberation, since her torch already began to draw towards its end. Observing this, she rushed forwards with desperate resolution, and committed herself to the guidance of chance. Accident, or rather a benevolent Providence directed her footsteps; and she reached the staircase and Urania's chamber, before her strength entirely failed

her. Here then she rested at length; but that rest was insensibility.

After some time her recollection returned. She raised herself, and saw with surprise, that the chamber, which Donat to favour his escape had caused to be fastened so carefully, was filled with people. She felt, that they conveyed her to a couch, and rendered her every possible assistance; and she heard them make a thousand kind enquiries respecting her health and her wishes: but her strength both of mind and body was so completely exhausted, that she found it impossible to pronounce a word, or even make a sign, that she was sensible of their attentions.

It was pain, which enabled her to give the

the first token of sensation. Her arms and bosom were much bruised, and the blood streamed copiously from a wound on her head. She has never been able to recollect, whether she received these injuries, when Donat threw her down the dungeon steps, or from her being struck by the falling stones while making her escape. The persons, who surrounded her couch, lost no time in binding up her wounds, and the pain of this operation forced from her a feeble cry. Finding that she was now sensible, they repeated their enquiries as to what had happened to her, and how she had been brought into so terrible a condition. She stammered out the word "earthquake!" Where was Count Donat, was the next

demand, which she answered by pointing to the private door conducting to the vaults.

She was soon removed to a more quiet chamber, and the care which was taken of her convinced her, that she had not fallen into the hands of enemies.

On the fourth day she was already declared to be convalescent; and it was announced to her, that the Commander of the Bishop of Coira's forces, which had conquered the Castle, requested an audience of her. She consented to receive him, and shortly after a young man of prepossessing appearance entered the room.

—"Noble Lady," said he, "though you are the wife of the cruel owner of this

this fortress, we are well aware, that you are not a partner in his crimes. His people are some of them slain; others have betaken themselves to flight; and it is in vain, that we have endeavoured to find the place of his concealment. Your pointing out the door into the vaults has not been sufficient; he cannot have made his escape through that passage, since the falling in of the roof has rendered it impracticable; and had he in his flight been overtaken by the vengeance of Heaven, how could *you* have avoided the sharing his fate? Be frank with us, noble Lady; I conjure you in the name of humanity, tell us, where he is concealed, and depend on our dealing

better with him, than he has been accustomed to deal with others."—

Helen mustered up all her strength, and endeavoured to relate the circumstances of her escape: but anxiety to be as brief as possible, and her endeavours to conceal Donat's ill-usage of her, (which she thought, duty to her husband forbade her revealing,) rendered every thing she said obscure and improbable. She mentioned the earthquake, and to prove it showed the bruises and wounds, which it had occasioned her. The stranger, however, assured her, that she must have received them in some other manner, for that no one in the Castle had perceived the slightest symptoms of an earthquake.

Helen,

Helen, however, endeavoured to establish her assertion; and while recalling the various circumstances which had passed in the caverns, she suddenly recollected the groans, which had struck her hearing. She earnestly entreated, that the heap of rubbish might be examined; she was obeyed; the stones were removed, and beneath them was discovered the shattered and lifeless form of the Count of Carlsheim.

It was now the general opinion, that the violence which Donat had used in forcing open the dungeon-door, had shattered the rotten cavern, had made the supports crack, and had brought down the roof, whose fall had involved in it his own destruction.

Helen's horror at this discovery, her urgent entreaties that the corse might have christian burial, and the many hours which she past in prayers for the repose of Donat's spirit, startled the present masters of the Castle not a little. They began to suspect, that she was not by any means so innocent a creature, and so unfortunate a victim of conjugal tyranny, as she had been represented, and as in truth she was. They therefore ceased to trouble her with questions, considering her as the confidante and accomplice of Count Donat's crimes; but as they had no other fault to lay to her charge, and as the power of her relations compelled them to treat her with respect, as soon as she was sufficiently

sufficiently recovered, she was removed to the Convent of Zurich, and left there with a hint by no means equivocal,— "that all things considered, she would do well to pass the remainder of her days within that sanctuary."—

Helen's joy at understanding, that she had been conveyed to Zurich, was indescribable: she immediately requested to see the venerable Countess Urania, and discovered to the patroness of her mother both herself and all that had happened. It was now, that her fate seemed disposed to abate its severity. In an unrestrained intercourse with this excellent woman, who received her with open arms, and to whom she unveiled her whole heart, she looked forward to a

life of tranquil happiness. Urania's conversation poured balsam into her wounded soul, and explained to her many things, which had hitherto appeared to her unaccountable. Donat's resolution to make her his wife was produced by a former passion, which he had entertained for her mother, and by a desire to be revenged on her father, the Count of Homburg; and that unknown cavern to which he had conducted her, was doubtless the same, in which (as it was reported) the worthy father of such a son had starved to death two of the fugitive monks of Curwald. Oh! Towers of Sargans, what crimes have been committed within your gloomy bounds! And will then the vengeance

of the Eternal Judge sleep for ever? Will neither the heavens rain down fire to consume you, nor the earth unclose to swallow you in its womb, and thus prevent you from reminding posterity of those horrible acts, to which you have been so long a witness?—Yet the blood of your barbarous master has purified you, and you are now the abode of innocence and virtue. Peace, long peace be with you, and be with your lawful possessors; and may the curse of retribution only fall on those, who shall dare to deprive those possessors of their right!

Solitude and experience sometimes endow the soul, which has withdrawn itself from earth to devote itself to Heaven, with a prophetic power. Even

now

now I see into futurity! I see, that the family of Carlsheim and Sargans, which has already suffered so much, has still much more to suffer; but again I say it —"Alas for those, by whom the descendants of Amalberga and Emmeline shall be robbed of their lawful inheritance, and compelled to experience the calamities of their predecessors."—

I have deviated from my narrative, to which I now return.—Helen lived tranquil by Urania's side, equally unconscious of the evil reports, which were circulated respecting her late misfortunes by her enemies, and of the benevolent intentions of her powerful friends. Her parents soon visited her at Zurich, and now that she was a widow,

widow, requested her to accept the hand of her former bridegroom, the Count of Torrenburg: but Helen knew but too well, that no Count of Torrenburg existed for *her*. She had courageously torn his image from her heart; and she avowed to her friends her knowledge of his passion for Amalberga, and declared, that to see them happy in the possession of each other was now the only wish of her heart.

Helen's relations listened to this declaration with no trifling regret: they would willingly have rewarded her for her past sufferings by the certainty, that the remainder of her life would be past in happiness with one of the noblest of Helvetian youths. But they had brought with

with them (for the purpose of persuading Helen to the proposed marriage) some of Torrenburg's relations, to whom his passion for Amalberga was by no means so unpleasant a subject. She was now a rich heiress; as Count Donat's only surviving daughter, she was entitled to the extensive domains of Carlsheim and Sargans, and consequently she was a much more advantageous match than Helen. This gave rise to some disputes between the friends of the different parties: but the solemn declaration of Count Donat's widow, that she never would lay aside that name, at length silenced every opposition; and she obtained from them all a promise, that they would mutually exert themselves

selves to accomplish the only wish, which she indulged on this side of the grave; namely, the union of Eginhart of Torrenburg with Amalberga of Sargans. They were informed by her, that according to Amabel's letter the lady was concealed in the Convent of Engelberg, and thither they hastened to apprize her of the happiness, which awaited her.

I need not say, that they sought her there in vain; the Count of Torrenburg's endeavours to discover her were also unsuccessful, till the arrival of Bloomberg, who assured him, that she must be in Landenberg's power, and that the most likely place to look for her was the Fortress of Rassburg. The consequence of this information was a bond of union between

between Torrenburg and the Friends
Freedom against Landenberg and
brother in iniquity, the insolent Ge
ler; and the Count immediately
companied Bloomberg to Stein, th
he might consult with his new
lies the best means for effecting La
denberg's overthrow and Amalberg
deliverance.

In the mean while William Tell
plan, for throwing off the Governor
yoke, and asserting the liberty of h
beloved country, had been gradual
ripening. The impression, which he an
his friends, Walter Forest, Bernsdor
and the two Melthals, had made upo
the general mind was great, and the
adherents were numerous; but th
succe

success of their enterprise still depended entirely upon its being kept a profound secret. Those men, whose plans were soon to burst out into flames terrible as the explosion of a volcano, and to give posterity an example of heroic devotion to the cause of Freedom, were as yet compelled to work in darkness, and arrange their vast designs in corners and by stealth.

It was not till the 28th of December (being the Festival of St. Alexander) that they ventured to muster their numbers in a large meadow near the Lake of the Four Cantons; this was to be their last conference, and even this they took the precaution of holding under covert of the night. The Count of Torrenburg

and

and Edmund Bloomberg were also present; but the former by his impatience had nearly ruined the whole design. Conscious of his exalted station, and of the valour of his new allies, he could not endure the degrading idea of skulking about in darkness and concealment, as if he were plotting the execution of some crime. He insisted upon an instant declaration of hostility against Landenberg, and that an attempt to rescue his beloved should be made without delay: it was not without difficulty that William Tell convinced him, how impossible it would be to rescue Amalberga any other way than by artifice without exposing her to the most imminent danger; and that he persuad

him to wait patiently till St. Sylvester's Eve, when (it was determined) the tyrant should have an open and forcible attack made upon him; though in making that attack, there would still be an absolute necessity for conducting it with the utmost caution.

Amalberga's friends had obtained some intelligence respecting her present situation. One of Arnold Melthal's sons, a spirited lad, equally well adapted to daring enterprise and the winding paths of artifice, found means to enter the Fortress of Rassburg in disguise, and examine whether any thing could be attempted towards the rescue of the lady. During her abode on the banks of the Lake of Thun, her sweetness and humility of manners;

her

her majestic air accompanied by the condescension of an angel; the little difference which she seemed to make between herself and the girls of the village, whom she honoured with the name of her companions; all these together had made her an universal favourite; and had not every appearance of a chain been hateful in the eyes of the sons of Freedom, it would have been easy for Amalberga to have established herself as the queen of one of the best people that the earth holds, and to have mounted Helvetia's throne by general acclamation.

To an eager desire for rescuing this adored lady from the power of Landenberg, was now united the wish to gain possession

possession of the strong Castle of Rassburg; which would secure to Helvetia the success of all those mighty plans, whose accomplishment still lay concealed within the bosom of futurity.

Alwyn, Arnold Melthal's son, when he ventured to approach the fortress in disguise, was not aware, that his was one of those countenances, which cannot pass unobserved. Fortunately, the eyes, whose notice he attracted, were those of one, by whom features like his were seldom viewed with displeasure. Landenberg happened to be absent, and had left his fair prisoner to the charge of a female attendant, who had formerly stood high in his estimation for the sake of her own beauty, and who now

now preserved her influence with him by condescending to watch over those, who were in present possession of that heart, to which she was herself become indifferent. Well skilled in manly beauty, she no sooner saw Alwyn pass along with a bucket on his head (for he had obtained entrance into Rassburg under the disguise of a common water-carrier) than she was convinced of his being something better, than his dress denoted. She accosted, and questioned him. His affected simplicity could not deceive her; and he saw himself compelled either to adopt some artifice, or to be reduced to that suspicious silence, which in such a situation would have been scarcely better than a confession of the truth.

—"And

—" And so you continue to deny," continued the girl, " that there is any secret reason for a man like you being here, habited in a manner to which, I am certain, you have never been accustomed? Young man, be frank with me! I should be sorry to give you over to some other questioner, who might use rough means to obtain an answer, or to order that you should be kept in custody, till the Governor returns. Then tell me honestly at once, who you are, and what motive has brought you hither?"—

Alwyn during this speech had examined the countenance of his new acquaintance, and fancied, that he could read in it marks of a partiality for him

by no means doubtful. His resolu was taken in a moment, and he th himself at her feet.

—" What brought me hither?" exclaimed; " 'twas Love, most beaut of all earthly creatures! But wh am.... Ah! shall I dare to avow m self one of the lowliest among the in bitants of yonder valley, and thus ma it certain, that my suit will be reject and myself driven with scorn from t presence of her whom I adore?"—

—" And who is it that you adore demanded Ursula.

—" You, lovely angel! you!" exclaimed passionately, while he seiz her hand, and prest upon it a thousa kisses; " my heart is devoted to y alone, and your cruelty will kill me!"

astonished and delighted Ursula herself from his embrace, and ut it was not long before she re-, anxious to convince herself, r half-faded charms had really o valuable a conquest. To make nan's vanity believe any thing ng, Heaven knows, is no diffi-lk; and half an hour was sufficient e her no doubt of her triumph. on grew weary of playing the , and she gave him to under-that he would not find her heart tely marble; and thus did the me Alwyn find himself involved mour, at whose termination he not guess, and of which, while it , he thought, that he had but little to be vain.

At present he reaped no great advantages from his artifice. It was impossible to get a sight of Amalberga, or convey to her a hint, that her friends in the valley were making preparations for her rescue. He was also soon compelled to retire by the return of the Governor, who was now frequently absent for days together from Rassburg on account of the popular disturbances, and who could only bestow a few isolated hours on the prosecution of his suit to the heiress of Sargans. As soon as the warder's horn announced the Governor's return, Ursula (who trembled, lest her supposed lover should be discovered by others, as he had been by her) requested him to be gone; yet still

there

there was a secret means left for him to gain entrance into the fortress of the rock, which (disagreeable as it was) for Amalberga's sake and the general advantage, he did not refuse to employ. At midnight his doating inamorata used to let a bucket down through a chasm in the wall; the rock was steep and flat; the unwilling Lover was then drawn up to the top, where he was obliged to purchase every little scrap of intelligence, which it was requisite for him to know, by a thousand lies and flattering speeches; every one of which, to an heart filled withHelvetian honesty, was scarcely less painful than the stab of a dagger.

He was rewarded, however, for this

sacrifice by obtaining the important information, that hitherto Landenberg's behaviour towards the Lady of Sargans had been restrained within the limits of the most respectful adoration: but that he had assured her with the most dreadful imprecations, that a period was fixed, beyond which he would no longer submit to be the patient victim of her severity. The first day of the ensuing year, he was determined, should make the cruel beauty completely his by fair means or by force. This intelligence induced Alwyn to be more frequent in his midnight visits; he repeated them, till every part of the fortress was become perfectly familiar, and till every little circumstance had been carefully gleaned

gleaned by him, which might assist his friends in their design of storming the fort and rescuing the lovely captive.

By the Festival of St. Sylvester every necessary preparation was completed; and all the machines were ready to be worked at once in various parts of the country, which might secure the success of an enterprise, of whose views the release of an imprisoned damsel made but a very trifling part—those views were of the most extensive nature; yet if the plan had failed, in spite of the justice of Tell's cause posterity would no doubt have branded him with the name of rebel, and confounded him with the common herd of unsuccessful adventurers, who have dared to

attempt objects beyond their power to attain. But as his plan was arranged with the utmost foresight, and its execution was followed with the most prosperous issue, after-ages have viewed his deed with admiration, have reckoned it as the proudest triumph of the rights of nature over cruelty and oppression, and have bestowed on its author the title of a Hero: so certain is it, that actions are almost always weighed according to their result, and the most impartial judge (without being aware of it) is frequently induced to decide unfairly of events, dazzled by the lustre of the success with which they were attended.

Had nothing but the Count of Torrenburg's

renburg's inclination been consulted, the attempt, which was to decide upon his future happiness or despair, would not have been deferred till the latest day possible; neither when it *was* made, would so small a number of men have been employed to carry it into effect. Perhaps in this respect something would have been sacrificed in consideration of the impatience natural to a lover; but Helvetia's deliverers were not without a certain portion of that obstinacy, which so often accompanies valour and resolution. Torrenburg's opinion would doubtless have had more influence with them, had he not been a nobleman and one who was able to bring so powerful a force either to their aid or against

them. They considered the most distant trace of authority over them with abhorrence, and were determined, that every step, which they made in the service of liberty, should be taken of their own free will. It was certain, that the fortress was but ill garrisoned, and that its security consisted solely in its inaccessible situation: in spite therefore of Torrenburg's entreaties and anger, they resolved, that no more than one hundred men should be allotted for this service; and among these the jealous Helvetians, who could not endure that any hands but their own should break their fetters, would not suffer one of Torrenburg's warriors to be introduced. It was not without some difficulty, that

: Count obtained permission to ac-
mpany the party himself, and to be
e next to Alwyn Melthal, who should
netrate into the Castle of Rassburg.
Never did any summer's day seem so
ng to the Count as St. Sylvester's,
hile he waited with impatience for the
parture of light. No sooner was it
rk, than the allies began to assemble
· twos and threes from different quar-
s. It was one of the most gloomy
nter nights, that ever favoured a se-
t enterprize; and the glimmering
er, which was the usual signal for
wyn to ascend the wall, was not yet
cernible. Midnight was already past;
ll there was no token of Ursula's ap-
oach; when suddenly the trampling

of horses was heard, and the gleam of approaching torches showed them a body of soldiers coming from the Castle by a path, which was well guarded by sentinels and provided with several draw-bridges. Landenberg was at the head of the troop. Unmoved by her tears and fainting, he had just informed Amalberga, that he should return the next day to hear her final decision; and he was now bending his course to Sarno, in order to exact the usual new-year's gift from the inhabitants of the Valley, and hear them renew the oath of submission to their Leige-Lord, the Emperor. It was an established custom of the vice-gerents to receive from the hands of the vassals on the first day of

the

he new year, what little had escaped heir extortion during the old one; in re- urn for which they never failed to romise greater indulgence for the fu- ure, nor in spite of that promise to. onduct themselves with increased op- ression.

As he journeyed onwards, Landen- erg recapitulated to himself the advan- ages, which this year had produced to im; the quantity of wealth which he ad collected in gold, jewels, and other aluables; the possesion of the lovely malberga, whom he already looked on as his own; and above all, the wer of throwing off the wearisome ask of hypocrisy, which he had at first en compelled to assume.

—" As

—" As to Gessler's death," said he to himself, " that has rather improved my situation, than done me any harm. It has relieved me from the rival of my greatness, and authorises me to exercise that severity, which is necessary for my own views, under the fair-sounding name of just revenge. These late unavailing efforts to oppose my will have convinced me, that I have to do with a weak, powerless people, who may be incensed indeed so far as to make some show of resistance at first, but whom firmness and chastisement will soon reduce within the limits of abject submission. There are not many Tells among them, God be thanked! He was the only man whom I feared, and luckily he

he is either dead, or a voluntary exile in some distant country; report says the former; but let him be where he will, so he be not here to spirit up my slaves against me with his poisonous influence. *My* slaves? Right; they are mine, no other's. The ensuing year will, I trust, make clear to the world, for *whom* I am labouring, and whose advantage and peril are most implicated in the business! Then when I have attained the height at which I aim, doubtless my new dignity being shared with their adored Amalberga will have no slight influence in reconciling these people to my authority; and her popularity will induce them to protect her husband against the wrath of the deceived Emperor.

peror. The precious prize once secure I shall then have no need of this assu med severity; the affection of my sub jects will suffice to preserve them i obedience; I shall be at liberty to follo the bent of my inclinations by ruling wit a gentle sway; and all of us will at onc be made happy, Amalberga, myself, an the country which we govern."—

Such was the subject of Landenberg reflections, many of which he occasion ally imparted to some of his confidenti attendants, as he rode along, totally un conscious of the foes so near him, an of the danger which threatened th speedy overthrow of all his ambitiou hopes and projects. Here and there sentence or two spoken in a loude

voic

voice than ordinary reached the hearing of the Helvetians, who were concealed among the various caverns of the Castle-rock: and then was many a sword half drawn from the scabbard to impose eternal silence upon the insolent boaster. The vigilance of the prudent chiefs, however, and consideration for the public welfare compelled them to repress their unseasonable zeal. An over-hasty attack would have been sufficient to ruin every thing. Landenberg, it's true, would probably have perished, but only to make room for a successor perhaps even worse than himself. The object here was not to make away with a single tyrant; no, it was to throw off a disgraceful yoke for ever, and to bequeath

the

the precious treasure Liberty to children, and to the children of children even down to the latest p rity. Landenberg therefore was s ed to proceed with his attendants u lested; nothing gave them warni the danger, which lurked so near cept now and then a low whisp noise among the brambles, which their hair stand an end, for it was the ghostly hour; and as they dre its being something supernatural, sound only served to make those heard it pursue their course wit greater speed.

Scarcely had the last horseman appeared in the farther part of the ley, or rather scarcely had dar

dropt her thick curtain between the enemies; scarcely had the mountain-echoes ceased to reverberate the last sound of the hoofs of their steeds, when Alwyn's guiding-star made its appearance: Ursula's lamp was seen glimmering on the battlements above. A few hasty words were spoken among the confederates respecting the conduct of the enterprise; the last directions were given; and then young Melthal sprang into the bucket destined to convey him to her who expected him so impatiently, and whom he now met for the last time with expressions of pretended love. It was no trifling sacrifice, which poor Alwyn made on this occasion to the general welfare. To conceal the feelings of

his

his honest guileless heart; to dissemble love for one who was totally indifferent to him; in many a rude tempestuous night to encounter dangers, such as nothing but the most sincere and ardent passion would have induced any other man to risk; and then at last to throw aside the mask, and to hear himself called a betrayer and a hypocrite, and called so with justice; this task was a most painful one, and keenly did Alwyn feel that his situation was disgraceful. Yet he thought, that even *this* sacrifice was not too much to make for his native land; and duty and patriotism made him submit to do that, which was of all things the most cruel to his feelings, and repugnant to his nature; they

y made him submit to play the hy-
ite.

ilently lamenting the ignominious
racter which he was obliged to sus-
, Alwyn followed his supposed mis-
s to a retired chamber, where (she
him) they should be secure from
rbance till morning; for hitherto
fear of discovery had only suffered
r interviews to last for a few mi-
es. But at the moment when she
ected to receive the kiss of ardent
e, and when she turned to her lover
r having carefully closed the door,
her utter astonishment a gag was
ed into her half-opened mouth; and
n seizing her arms, her supposed
nirer fastened them with strong
cords

cords to the bed-posts. It is true, that the general safety had been declared to require the death of this wretched creature; but the noble heart of Alwyn revolted at the idea. Even the precautions, which circumstances now made it absolutely necessary for him to take, caused his cheeks to burn with indignation against himself; he took care to confine Ursula's hands in such a way, that the pressure of the bonds could give her no pain; nor could he resolve to leave even a creature, whom in his heart he despised, a prey to absolute despair.

—"Fear nothing, Ursula," said he in a gentle voice, while quitting the room; "every thing shall be explained shortly,

shortly, and on my soul no harm shall happen to you"—a promise, which was religiously fulfilled.

Alwyn now hastened back to the battlements, and drew up the Count of Torrenburg in the same manner, by which he had ascended himself; and anxious as Eginhart was to fly to Amalberga's assistance, still did he not quit his station, till two more of the confederates were safely landed on the platform of the Castle. These in their turn rendered the same service to their companions, and a sufficient number were soon mustered within the walls to authorize their proceeding to more hazardous attempts. Half of them seized the sleeping centinels, while the rest without

expired at his feet. The dawn of morning discovered the walls of the Castle of the Rock dyed with the blood both of friends and foes. By the time that the sun was fully risen, the work was completed; Helvetia's sons had achieved their object, and the sheaths once more received their bloody swords. The chiefs now employed themselves in giving orders and making dispositions to preserve their conquest, while Torrenburg flew to deliver his Amalberga. He found her in a lately chamber; she was on her knees praying for *him*. The noise of the combat had roused her from sleep; yet convinced that her situation could not alter for the worse, she experienced no alarm for herself, till as the clash of arms occasionally drew nearer to her chamber-door, she

heard the name of Torrenburg shouted, and concluded, that he was among the combatants: then *indeed* she trembled, and sought refuge from her terrors in supplication to her Patron-Saint. The heart of the pious girl was full of confidence in the Divine justice: she doubted not, that the Ruler of all things had decreed every thing for the best; she knew, that neither herself nor Torrenburg had *merited* to suffer, and she trusted, that Heaven would act towards her with gentleness. In her supplications therefore she rather spoke of the goodness of Providence, than implored its help: or if she prayed for any thing, it was that a speedy stop might be put to the shedding of blood, of whose flowing she was but too well convinced by the clashing of arms, and the dying groans of some

me, who were slaughtered at no great stance from her chamber.

A long and fearful silence now succeed-l. Suddenly her door was thrown open, id a knight in complete armour entered e room. He hastened towards her, ised his visor, and well did she recol-ct the noble countenance of him, whose ortrait was engraved on her heart in cha-cters indelible: but she recollected also is engagements to Helen; she was con-ious of her danger and the weakness of er heart, and attempted to force away he hand, which he had seized, and prest o his lips with passion. It was long, be-ore she recovered from her surprise and onfusion sufficiently to comprehend the whole extent of those delightful views, which were now presented before her by ndulgent Fortune.

A Nun is but a sorry describer of l
scenes; and she, who traces this narra
though she may not perhaps have alw
been a stranger to tender sentiments,
is unwilling to dwell longer than is ne
sary upon those, which filled the hear
the happy Amalberga, when she sank i
her lover's arms, and murmured—" T
renburg, I am thine!"—I have since b
assured, that in these first moments
rapture the name of Helen was not forg
ten. In truth some trifling recollecti
some little portion of gratitude at le
was due to the unfortunate, who to p
cure the happiness of Amalberga and T
renburg had not hesitated to immolate
own. The sacrifice was indeed a m
difficult and painful one; but never
Helen once regret, that she had made

While the lovers forgot every thing in contemplation of those flattering pro-cts, which futurity showed them on all es; and while the Helvetians were em-yed in taking every possible precaution, it might preserve to them the Fortress, which they had so valiantly obtained session; the other Patriots (as had been eviously arranged) were carrying their rious designs into execution in different rts of the country.

Peregrine of Landenberg had reached stle-Sarno before day-break. He slept a few hours, and then rose to welcome day, which, he was determined, should him the husband of the Heiress of Sar-ns. He had commanded, that towards ning a strong guard should conduct her ther from Rassburg, when a Friar, be-

longing to the Abbot of St. Gall, and who was entirely devoted to the Governor, had engaged to perform the marriage ceremony between them: whether with her consent, or without it, the good father cared but little.

Anxious to give as creditable an appearance as possible to this most important transaction of his life, Landenberg thought it best for the general edification to open the day's business by walking in solemn procession to the neighbouring church. For this purpose he was already descending the great staircase accompanied by a numerous train of courtiers, when he was informed, that the inhabitants of the adjacent districts had assembled in the valley below, each bringing the accustomed New-year's offering.

Landenberg

Landenberg had great confidence in omens; he looked upon it as a pledge of future good-fortune, that before he had set his foot without the Castle-walls, his course was impeded by presents. The procession to the church was deferred for awhile: part of his attendants were sent to take charge of the gifts, which had been brought to him; of the fatted oxen, the corn, the fruit, the cloth woven by the skilful hands of the industrious Helvetian housewives; the casks of wine; and here and there a few bags of coin, which were not the least welcome part of the offerings. In the mean while the Governor himself remained in the front-court, attended by a few of his most confidential attendants, and prepared for the reception of "the slaves of his servants," as it

was usual for him to term the brave l
vetians.

The deputation arrived. It consiste
fifty persons, with Henric Melthal at t
head, Henric, on whose locks eighty
ters had now shed their snows.

—" Lord Governor," said the ven
ble man, approaching Landenberg, "
old year expired yesterday; the new
begins to-day. How you have susta
the character of Imperial Majesty an
the opprest children of a free-born na
that is *your* affair. How we begin the
is *our's!* Be God the judge between
and us, Peregrine of Landenberg; (
who has already judged Gessler, as he
judge you! But as for you, my sons
as ye see me do, nor hesitate to lay d
your lives in the cause of liberty and
tice."—

It is inconceivable to me, how the darg old man was suffered to proceed so far i his speech. The Almighty must have ruck a panic into the tyrant and his ase dependents; but now recovering hemselves, they hastily drew their sideveapons, which (from being rather inended for ornament than use, and able to lo but little injury) were generally called 'holy-swords." Some, who were unrovided with even these weak instruments, hastened into the Castle in search of arms; in the mean while old Melthal nd his trusty companions had drawn conealed pike-heads from under their cloaks, vhich they fixed dexterously and with romptitude on the tops of their long white staves; and now was the signal iven for beginning a massacre, which

once commenced was not concluded hastily. Among the first who fell was the Governor. The feeble arm of Henric Melthal, strengthened by Heaven and the justice of his cause, gave the decisive blow; and Edmund Bloomberg hastened to extricate his father-in-law from the croud of those, who (now that they were recovered from their first consternation) prest on him to destroy the slayer of their chief. Landenberg cursed his fate, that he should fall so disgracefully by the arm of a dotard, and poured out his last breath in execrations. The combat became general. The Friends of Liberty were attacked by the Governor's rémaining attendants, who were now better armed; but this opposition was not of much avail, since at a given signal a second party of Helvetians,

who were in waiting on the outside of the Castle, hastened to support their confederates.

The superiority of numbers being now on their side, the conquerors proclaimed quarter in the name of Henric Melthal. The loss of their chief had deprived the canty band of his adherents of all their ourage: they were glad to sheathe their eapons, and the conquering Helvetians ok them under their protection, and nducted them uninjured to the boundies. The gallant men were unwilling to in their native soil with blood shed unessarily, and doubted not, that such a barous measure would have induced Almighty to withdraw his blessing n their enterprise. They lost no time aking measures for maintaining them-

selves in the possession of Castle-Sarno. Towards evening intelligence arrived, that Rassburg also had been attacked with success, and during the three or four succeeding days similar tidings were received from other parts of the country: Schwannau, Kussnach, Zinguri (which was not yet finished) and many other places of importance, had been wrested from the hands of Helvetia's tyrants. Such universal success testified, that the arm of the Protector of innocence had fought in their cause; and they thought, the best means of showing their gratitude for such powerful aid to him, who detests unnecessary bloodshed, was to use their victory with mildness and moderation. They had expelled their enemies, and reinstated themselves in their natural rights: more they

ught not, more they desired not; and was this laudable moderation, which, by venting them from aiming to obtain rther advantages, enabled them to se- re, what they had won already.

Peace after so long an absence returned ce more to these happy vallies; and a n fraternal union for offence and de- nce was established, which I pray, that od may grant to last, as long as the orld exists.

Has not the ignorant Nun suffered her- lf to be enticed out of her proper sphere, hile she described scenes of war and the forts of Liberty? She, a weak defence- s woman, a slave bound in lasting fet- rs? Yet Heaven be thanked for it, ose fetters are light: pious submission ables me to bear them, and they will

ere

ere long be loosened by the hand
Death.

Count Donat's widow lived in tranq
seclusion at Zurich in the society of t
Countess Urania; and their prayers we
frequently offered up for the success of t
honest Helvetians. They rejoiced to he
of their victories, of Amalberga's resc
and of her union with the Count of Torre
burg. But Helen did not wish to be he
self a spectatress of their felicity; a
(when shortly after their marriage t
happy pair visited her to express the
mutual gratitude) could she be prevail
upon to pass more than one hour in th
society; and many, many of the succe
ing days were for her days of angui
Poor Helen was but a weak mortal,
saint, no angel: and alas! to *forget* i
task not so easy, as some may think!

Yet in recompence for her past sorrows Heaven had still reserved one pleasure for her future life. Oh! Blessed Virgin, what a pleasure was that! what a surprise! what an unexpected re-union!—But let me proceed regularly.

The good Domina of Zurich was dead; the Princess Euphemia had already been appointed Abbess of Tull, and therefore could not accept the vacant dignity. No persuasion could induce Urania, at her advanced age, to fill so laborious a situation, and the lot now fell upon Count Donat's widow. She obeyed the general voice, and was well-pleased to have a means for exerting benevolence in a more extended circle. She became (what I say of her ought not to be counted to her as a merit, since she did but her duty) she became the

the mother of the oppress; and the man, who intrusted to her a daughter, a sister, or a mistress, knew, that she could be no where safer than in her arms. This was universally known; and many a knight, before he set out on some distant expedition, secured under her protection those treasures, which he valued dearer than all others, which the world contained.

One day a knight requested an audience of her: as soon as she saw him, it struck her, that his features were not altogether unknown to her.

—"Sir Knight," said she, "it appear to me, that we have met before."—

—"You say truly, holy mother, answered he; "it was I, who by th Bishop of Coira's command took the Castl of Sargans by storm, and afterwards con

ducte

ducted you to this Convent. Methinks, you placed but little confidence in me on that occasion, though perhaps it would have been for your advantage, had you shown more: but its true, you knew not my name; knew not, that never had any one reason to repent the trust, which he reposed in Herman of Werdenberg. I will not follow your example; I am now preparing to reveal to you my dearest secrets, and solicit you to become the guardian of my most precious treasure. Grief of heart some time ago drove me from my native land: my uncle's death necessitated my return; and being once more in Germany, I suffered myself to be persuaded to remain there: nay, under a borrowed name I consented to act as the knight-protector of the new Bishop's sub-

jects,

jects, and to become the assertor of his rights and privileges.

" It was in this capacity, that I became acquainted with you, Lady, in the Castle of Sargans: report, and mysterious circumstances respecting your conduct, I confess, had not prejudiced me in your favour; and perhaps I did not treat you with so much respect and attention, as (I am now well convinced) was justly due to your merits. After escorting you hither, I returned to Sargans, being commissioned to defend the Castle against Landenberg and his associates, in the name of Count Donat's daughters; whom the Bishop had adopted as his wards, and whom he publicly declared his intention of reinstating in their rights, as soon as the place of their concealment could be ascertained.

ained. It seems, the rebellious Landenberg thought, that this was the fit time for making himself master of all Rhœtia, while the Ten Jurisdictions were torn to pieces by the tumults and confusion, to which his artifices had given rise; but report must have already informed you, how soon those vain hopes were crushed by the noble efforts of the assertors of Liberty.

" In order that I might not be quite idle during my undisturbed residence at Sargans, the Bishop (who has no antipathy to gold) commissioned me to enquire into the truth of an old tradition very current among the people, that immense treasures lie buried in the foundation of that antient fortress. Upon asking some questions, I was conducted to an old and ruined

ined well in a remote court, and assured that it contained wealth inexhaustible. The Bishop on this report desired me to cause the well to be cleared out; but its contents furnished nothing but venomous reptiles, filth, and some human bones, the melancholy memorials of former cruelties, whose commission Heaven no doubt had long since punished.

Other places were afterwards pointed out to me as the repository of this buried wealth; but no better success attended their examination. At length I resolved to set my workmen to clear out that subterraneous passage, the falling-in of whose roof had so nearly proved your destruction. It seemed to me much more probable, that I should find here that of which I was in search, than in those places which I had already

eady examined; but it was my full de-
mination, in case of discovering the sup-
sed treasures, not to give them up to the
shop, but to reserve them for the heir-
s of Carlsheim and Sargans, who had
:ely been rescued from Landenberg's
wer, and was now Countess of Torren-
urg. It was however less my object to
id wealth which I despised, than to fur-
sh my followers with a harmless occupa-
on, and by restoring the concealed pass-
ge (which in our turbulent times is abso-
itely necessary in every fortress) to ren-
er a trifling service to posterity. The
ork was difficult and tedious; however,
was just rejoicing in the reflection, that a
w days would suffice to finish it, when
he Bishop of Coira found it impossible to
elay any longer with common de-
cency

cency the restoring of Sargans to the Countess Amalberga and her husband. One branch of the passage alone remained in ruins, and I would gladly have completed my task; but Count Eginhart was already at the gates of Sargans. I hastened to deliver up every thing, which had been committed to my custody, and we renewed our former friendship; a friendship, which in the earlier part of our lives had been most intimate.

"It was my intention to request his permission to finish the repairs of the subterraneous caverns: unluckily, as we sat conversing together, and recalling the events of former days over our flowing goblets, he mentioned the sister of his bride, who had once made upon my heart a very forcible impression; but my passion

a was not strong enough to make me
sent to commit my honour to the
eping of a daughter of Count Donat.
e Count painted in glowing colours the
ppiness, which he enjoyed with Amal-
rga; and he finally accused me of hav-
g treated the Lady Emmeline unworthi-
, and of having driven her into the jaws
perdition by my rigour and contempt.
s her relations have always wrapt in my-
ery the latter scenes of Emmeline's life,
am even at this moment ignorant, as to
hat is become of Her, who was once so
lear to me; nor could I understand, to
hat the Count alluded in the conclusion
f his speech. I could not, however, al-
ow, that I had acted by her with injust-
ce, and asserted, with that warmth which
s natural to me, that no man of prudence

and

and honour would have acted other
Our conversation grew bitter; a
length we parted in such anger, that i
impossible for me to submit to aski
him as a favour, that I might pro
my subterraneous labours.

" Perhaps you will be surprised a
being so anxious about such a trifle,
repairs of these vaults; I must ther
confess to you, that the real motive c
wish to examine this passage thorou
was nothing more than a dream; bu
dream was in truth a very remar
one.

" The first time that I broke a lan
a public tournament, it was my fortu
obtain the prize, a ring apparently of c
derable value. I was pleased both wit
jewel, and with the manner in which

ta

tained it, and never failed to wear it on all solemn festivals; till a person well skilled in precious stones convinced me, that the diamond was false and the ring itself scarcely worth three golden shields *. Incensed at having been so grossly imposed upon, I snatched it from my finger, and threw it over the battlements: the circumstance of its having been the reward of my address soon made me wish to recover it; but though my squire was immediately dispatched, he returned without having been able to find it. I had quite forgotten this ring and all its circumstances; but on both the two nights preceding Torrenburg's entry into the Castle of Sargans, I dreamt, that in traversing the subterraneous passage I found my lost ring, and

* A coin so called, from its bearing a shield imprest upon it.

that the false stone was changed into a amond, which illuminated the whole vern with its radiance.

"I cannot account for the strong i pression, which this dream made up my fancy; yet (Heaven knows!) I but little store upon the treasu of this world, and were I possest all the diamonds which the earth contai I should only employ them to adorn c Redeemer's cross; that cross, which it my firm resolution to wear in futu against the Saracens, and other enemies our holy religion. Yet in spite of th contempt of wealth, and of the little fai which I put in omens, the repetition this dream struck my imagination so fo cibly, that I could not rest without asc taining, whether the vaults did really co tain the ring, which I had so long lost.

"M

"My disagreement with Torrenburg had made it impossible for me to satisfy my doubts by means of the Castle-entrance: but I thought it by no means unlikely, that there might be some communication between the passage and the ruined Abbey of Curwald, which was situated at no great distance, and was just beginning to be rebuilt.

"I was well acquainted with Father John; a worthy man, who had lately been appointed the Superior of those few Monks, who had escaped from Count Donat's barbarity. He readily acceded to my request, and I immediately began my work.

"For several days the ruins were examined without success: yet the assurance of one of the elder Monks, that he remem-

bered having heard (but merely as a tr
dition) that a private communication h
formerly existed between the Convent a
Sargans, made me unwilling to give up t
pursuit. It was frequently my custc
after dismissing my labourers (weari
with their fruitless endeavours to disco
that, which they were firmly persuad
had no existence) to wander by myś
and mark the melancholy contrast 'm
by the slowly-rising walls of the new bui
ing, with the ruins of the old one wh
had not yet been removed. The va
beneath the Convent being generally
scene of our enquiries, as affording us
best chance for finding the so much wish
for passage, I frequently loitered h
alone, after my workmen had left me
the evening. A fixed melancholy l

tal

aken possession of my soul: in truth, it ould not well be otherwise, surrounded as I was on all sides by memorials of mortality, and the marks of celestial judgments!—

—"Where," said I often to myself, "where are now the voluptuous pleasures of the Monks of Curwald? where the pride and power of the tyrants of Carlheim and Sargans? The grave has swallowed them all; nothing remains of them, but the memory of their crimes and the detestation of posterity!—Herman, still preserve in your heart unshaken the love of virtue, and not less the hatred of vice: be at once the terror of the profligate and the friend of the innocent and the helpless. Bring equally before the world's eye the rights of the priest and the crimes of the oppressor, and unite in one person the protecting and the avenging angel."—

"These ideas prest themselves upon my mind with more than ordinary force, as I sat one evening in one of the Convent vaults upon a heap of stones. It was in the vault nearest to those of Sargans; and despairing of finding the old secret communication, I had at length resolved to employ my workmen in digging out a new one. They had already commenced their labours, and were retired after making no inconsiderable progress. The hour was late; darkness had closed round me, but an iron lamp was fixed against the wall and guided my steps, as I slowly traversed to and fro this abode of religious melancholy. The scene was congenial to the state of my feelings; I consecrated it to secret sorrow; and here it was that I offered up my prayers for the future, here

it

; that I poured forth my tears, while
ing upon the past. Yes, holy Mo-
my *tears!* The stern and haughty
an of Werdenberg has wept fre-
ly; has wept, when if any eye had
ssed the drops, his cheek would have
ed with shame at the unworthy cause,
sorrow; to *you* alone, to the ear of
ent pity, he scruples not to disclose
ecret of his weakness.
ady, my tears streamed for hav-
formed an early attachment for
who deserved not my affection. I
adored Emmeline of Sargans; but I
ier from my heart, convinced that it
mpossible for *her* to be virtuous, who
een educated in the very lap of vice.
Amalberga, Emmeline's sister, and
had been educated with her, was

modest, pure, and irreproachable; the
why not Emmeline? What had sinc
happened to that unfortunate was un
known to me; and my disagreement wit
her brother-in-law prevented my obtain
ing that information from him, which
was now most anxious to obtain; for one
of his expressions had cut me to the very
soul, and I strove in vain to banish it
from my memory. He told me,
"that my rigour had driven Emmeline
into the jaws of perdition;" and while his
words lay heavy upon my heart, I could
not but own, that it was possible for his
accusation to be well-founded. An union
with an honest man, such as Herman of
Werdenberg boasts himself to be, would
have been the best and most certain means
of rescuing her from the power of her li-

centious

centious father and the contagion of his example. Yet what could I do? Say, that I was mistaken in my judgment of Emmeline; still was it incumbent on me to run so great a risque to preserve her, as to entrust the care of my honour to one, who I feared would prove a wanton?

"But at all events, these considerations came too late. Nothing was now left for me but to banish recollections which, (Heaven only knows, why) intruded themselves upon me so forcibly, and which certainly were the most absurd and fruitless, with which I could have employed my mind. Yet still they *did* employ it in spite of all my efforts; as I sat with my eyes sometimes fixed on the dark vaults which frowned above me, sometimes on the glimmerings of the distant lamp, without being con-

scious what it was, at which I was
At length incensed at my own
started from my seat, and was quit
vault abruptly, when a faint n
struck my hearing.

"I stopped. It was not the fir
that I had heard something like a
while traversing these vaults; bu
always supposed the noise to be o
ed by the wind, or else to be the
my own heart-drawn sighs. But
was not only more loud and more d
but I almost fancied, that it was fo
by sounds resembling words spo
one in agony.

"I hastened back to the place, v
had just quitted. I shouted, to
whether an echo would answer n
all was silent.—I removed to a di

ame back again; I placed my head ainst the wall of the cavern; I knelt, d laid my ear to the ground; I heard e noise again. I endeavoured to trace ; still it continued, sometimes louder, metimes weaker; till at length it conlucted me to a small iron grating inserted n the ground, and from whence the wind, which blew upon me, seemed to be more heavy and chilling, than that which I breathed in the vaults above.

"And through this opening did a voice now reach me, whose melancholy tones seemed those of a female! It sounded so audibly, that all my doubts vanished at once, and all my sensations resolved themselves into the single eager enquiry—'By what means I could assist the sufferer?'—

—"Are you then come at last?" an-

swered the voice; "but speak for I cannot understand what yo My senses are so confused. brain seems to whirl round and rapidly!"—

"I repeated my enquiries, but better effect.

—"I hear the sound of your v not your words," answered the "and weakness prevents my drag self nearer to the grate—Do you l food?—Alas! it is so long since visited me!—I was afraid, that died suddenly—Afraid, did I say Heaven, who would have suspect I should ever have dreaded l death!"—

"These words were pronounced and in broken sentences. I now s my voice to its utmost extent, an

ith peculiar emphasis on the words Help" and "Liberty."

"Liberty?" she repeated; "no, uprian; at your price it would be too early purchased. Urge me no more to e the partner of your flight: could I ave ever stooped to disgrace, I need not ave languished so long in this dreary ungeon. If I have no choice left but eath or infamy, I prefer the former; ave me, and let me die!—And yet....)h! God in Heaven! To part with even he most miserable existence is so bitter. Oh! it is still so bitter!"

"I saw, that it would be vain for me to bour any more at making myself under- tood; and the faint tone, in which these st words were uttered, alarmed me. Yet spoke once again, but no answer was re-

turned;

turned; I doubted not, that the unfortunate had fainted.

"How I might effect her delivery with the utmost celerity, I knew not; yet in my anguish and uncertainty I accidentally struck upon that, which was most prudent: I hastened to the small temporary building inhabited by Abbot John and his Monks; I related in a few words what had happened, and requested their advice.

"The Fraternity one and all hastened with me to the vault, every one bearing a mattock, a pick-axe, or some such instrument. They were holy benevolent men, resembling the original founders of their Order, and had escaped as it were by a miracle from the flames, in which their guilty brethren had perished. They were eager to redeem by their own conduct the

the slur, which the crimes of others had brought upon their Convent, and were as greedy of good actions, as most other Monks are of rich legacies and well-stored cellars.

"We were now near the vault, and already the beams of the distant lamp struck our eyes; but on our entrance, those among us who were best-sighted were aware, that the vault was not so totally unoccupied, as I had left it. By the glimmerings of a small lanthorn a tall dark figure was descried, kneeling on the before-mentioned grating. I sprang forward. The stranger heard my steps, started from the ground, and rushed by me so suddenly, that I attempted to stop him in vain. I called to the approaching Monks not to let him pass; but before they

they could reach him, his foot stumbled, and he fell prostrate on the ground.

"Totally engrossed by their impatience to rescue the prisoner, my companions were hastening forwards without paying any attention to the stranger; but a thought, which passed through my mind like a flash of light, made me conceive, how important it was to examine him. I flattered myself, that I should discover in him that same Luprian, whom the unfortunate had mentioned, and who in all probability was her gaoler. Should my conjecture prove correct, I considered this meeting as a great step towards her deliverance: I therefore grasped him firmly by the arm, and dragged him towards the lamp, in order that I might examine my prize.

"I be-

I beheld a miserable creature, enve-
ed in the ragged habit of a monk, and
ose bloodless cheeks, sunk eyes, and
ciated limbs would have excited my
epest compassion, had I not had good
se to harbour suspicions, that com-
ssion was a sentiment, of which he was
t little deserving.

—" Art thou Luprian?" said I in a
undering voice.

" He sank at my feet, and stammered
t an avowal.

—" Wretch!" I continued; " what
otive could induce thee to confine an
nfortunate woman in yonder subterra-
ous dungeon?"—

" He was silent for a few moments;
en suddenly starting from the ground—
You know that she *is* confined there,"
said

said he with a furious look, "and know ing that, you know enough to destro me! Ask me no more questions; I wi answer none!"—

"He threw himself sullenly upon th heap of ruins, and maintained an obstinat silence. Unwilling to own that I knew no more than his name, I first endeavou ed to terrify him into a disclosure of thi mystery; and finding my threats produc no effect, I had recourse to persuasion painting in as strong colours as possibl the cruelty of suffering the unfortunate t remain longer in her prison, and exhort ing him to atone in some degree for hi faults towards his captive, by being him self the instrument to effect her release In the mean while my companions ha fallen to work with their spades and mat

tocks

ks; but large pieces of stone frequent-
fall into the dungeon below; and the
s of the sufferer, who dreaded being
shed beneath their weight, convinced
m, how dangerous was this mode of
ouring her deliverance, and finally com-
led them to desist from the attempt.
What was now to be done? While
agitated this question, Luprian stood
h his arms folded, silent and thought-
, as if He too had been resolving some
ficult point; at length he threw himself
his knees before us; and on condition
t his life and liberty should be secured
him, he made a proposal, which he
ore to fulfil conscientiously.
—"No one but myself," said he, "can
ble you to set that captive free, and it
s my power to show you such means
as

as are most sure and speedy. You see how rotten is this vault, and you may judge from the faint murmur of her complaints, how deep her dungeon is sunk into the ground. It will at any rate be long, ere you can force your way to her; and from her extreme weakness it is unlikely, that she should live till your arrival, even should she escape the imminent danger of having her brains dashed out by some fragment of the crumbling roof. But only speak one word to assure me of life and forgiveness, and I will immediately furnish you with explanations, which (should you refuse my offer) this dagger shall enable me to take with me to the grave."—

"The naked steel, which Luprian now pointed towards his bosom, inspired us with

th no alarm. It would have been easy wrest the weapon from his grasp; but ir impatience to assist the unfortunate ptive compelled us to give the required omise. Her complaints had now again ased to be audible; and we felt, that ot a moment was to be lost, if we meant find her still in existence.

" As soon as we had solemnly engaged ot to attempt either his life or freedom, uprian resigned his dagger to one of the onks, and informed us, that in order accomplish our object it would be ne-ssary to quit the vault, and seek a dif-rent entrance to the lady's dungeon, hich was well known to him. Accord-gly we followed him for some time, till e arrived at a remote part of the Con-nt ruins.

—" Here,"

—"Here," said he, stopping before a ruined wall, from which he removed a few loose stones, and showed us a narrow flight of stairs; "here you must descend, and these steps will conduct you to the place, of which you are in search. Now then I have performed my promise, and require the performance of yours: permit me to retire."—

"I hastily seized a torch from one of the Monks, and was hastening down the staircase, without giving myself a moment's reflection: but the more prudent Abbot detained me, gave the torch to Luprian, and commanded him to finish the work which he had begun, before he claimed the reward of his services.

"Nothing was left for him but to obey. He guided us down about fifty steps, and

fter reaching the foot of the stairs we had subterraneous passage to traverse of the ame length with that, which had led us rom the grating to the ruined wall. It was terminated by an iron door strongly fastened on the outside, and which had we not detained Luprian, we should have found no little difficulty, and lost no little time, in opening. As I made this observation, I cast upon him an accusing glance; but the door unclosing left me no time to express in words my indignation at this proof of his intended treachery. We rushed eagerly into the dungeon, and found it to be a large vaulted cell, of which darkness had taken such complete possession, that the beams of our torches were insufficient to dissipate the gloom, and could only shed a faint glimmering around

around us. Its only recommenda
were its loftiness and space. By ho
our lights on high, we could discern
with difficulty) the iron grating ins
in the roof, through which the compl
of the prisoner had so seasonably rea
me. Exactly beneath it stood a loaf
a flask of wine, which Luprian had jus
down into the dungeon ; and in a co
of it stretched on a miserable pallet the
ject of our search lay fainting, as ind
we had suspected from her silence. V
the assistance of one of the your
Monks I raised her from the ground,
bore her to the upper air, which we
sidered as the most likely means of br
ing her to herself.

" This hope however proved vain.
mation was lost too completely to b

ea

asily recalled. Above an hour had lapsed since our conveying her to the Abbot's dwelling (where no means were neglected that could restore animation) before we had the least reason to flatter ourselves with hopes of her recovery. At length with inexpressible delight we saw her half unclose her eyes; but she instantly shut them again on account of the pain caused in them by the light, to which they were now quite unaccustomed.

"We gave her every possible assistance, and after some time she gained strength and recollection enough to enable her to comprehend the favourable change, which had taken place in her situation. Tears of joy, and her clasped hands raised in gratitude to Heaven, were her only answer. She strove to thank us for the

service which we had rendered her; but emotion choaked her utterance, and to express her sense of our kindness by looks was not in her power, since the beams of the sun (who was now risen) were so painful to her eyes, that she had been obliged to cover her face with a thick veil to save herself from relapsing into insensibility.

"We therefore carefully excluded daylight from her chamber, and left her to repose. While she slept, we resolved to take the opportunity of making Luprian explain a business, which we conceived to be of some importance, and respecting which our curiosity was raised to the highest pitch by hearing some of the Monks assert their persuasion, that Luprian's features were not unknown to them. The last Abbot of Curwald, who

supposed to have perished in the con-
ration, had borne that name, and in
e of his pale countenance and meagre
m they verily believed my prisoner to
no other. We were now all impatience
ascertain this point; but we found,
t in order to effect our object we ought
have been more upon our guard. Oc-
pied by the melancholy situation of the
y, which excited universal interest and
npassion, not one of us had paid the
st attention to her gaoler: now that we
ollected him, he was not to be found.
appeared probable, that he had forsaken
immediately upon our entrance into
subterraneous dungeon, since no one
nembered to have seen him since that
ne, nor indeed to have bestowed a
ought upon him. We had now nothing

left for it but to rail at our inattention, and to lay the blame upon each other. However, we did not think our loss of any material consequence, since we doubted not the lady's ability to clear up the mystery; and at all events the captive was at liberty, and we had effected a good deed.

"She awoke, greatly strengthened by her refreshing slumber: her first request was to be removed from the society of men, and committed to the charge of persons of her own sex. We had already agreed with a respectable widow in one of the neighbouring villages, that the invalid should be taken to her house, as soon as she was able to bear the removal. The good woman soon made her appearance and the stranger's impatience to quit th

Monaste

onastery was so extreme, that we judged
r likely to suffer less detriment from the
urney than from delay. The distance
as not great; she was placed in an easy
tter; and her nurse took such good care
f her both during her removal and after-
ards, that she was quickly pronounced
ut of all danger. Her eyes again became
ccustomed to day-light; her hearing was
o longer hurt by the loudness of human
oices, and she could speak without diffi-
lty: yet has she never thought proper
) disclose her name either to myself, or to
ie Abbot who visited her daily.—But let
still remain concealed; there is at least
? title, which after hearing the brief re-
ion of her sufferings I know well to be
r proper right; the title of the purest
d most heroic of virtuous martyrs, a

name which deserves to be engraved on marble, and employed to add sanctity to altars!

"You are surprised, holy Lady, to hear the cold and serious Herman speak with such enthusiasm; but let it not injure me in your opinion. The rescued prisoner perhaps was once beautiful, but now she is so no longer. Sorrow and confinement have robbed her person of every charm, which could inspire the voluptuary's heart with passion: yet were I ever to love again, my soul should be devoted to the perfection of female virtue, not of female loveliness. Emmeline, the enchanting Emmeline, with all her train of charms and graces, perhaps, I may in time cease to remember; but never, oh! never shall I forget the form of my pale emaciated captive,

e, sinking into the grave the victim of
: principles; never while he has breath,
ll that interesting countenance fade
m the recollection of Herman of Wer-
nberg!

" But I have wandered widely from the
ject of this long discourse; I came hi-
r to make a request, to which all that
ave said is but an introduction: the
alth of this noble persecuted creature,
my friend, my sister, my preserved-
e, is now almost re-established. She be-
is to consider, what it will hereafter be
st expedient for her to do; and as she
s, that she has no relation in the world
whom she dares confide her interests,
: has condescended to ask my advice re-
:cting her future proceedings. We both
eed, that a convent is the most proper

retreat for her in her present circum stances; and on my mentioning to he that, which is under your direction, hol Mother, she received the proposal wit rapture.

—"Oh! surely," she exclaimed, "m mind cannot yet be quite itself again, or could not have hesitated a moment re specting my choice.—Helen of Homburg —the Convent of Zurich!—Heaven! powers, how could I have forgotten thos dear dear names so long?"—

"She then enquired eagerly, whethe Urania Venosta still lived within thes walls; and when I answered in the affirm ative, she discovered such strong emotion as her gentle despondent manners ha little led me to expect her being capab of feeling. She clasped her hands in e stacy

stacy; a shower of tears rolled down her pale cheeks, while she sank on her knees, and returned thanks to Heaven; she then entreated me to leave her without delay, and prepare a reception for her in your Convent. I would willingly have first ascertained, whether she was already known to you; but her impatience would not admit of my postponing my journey for an instant, and I was compelled to depart unsatisfied.

"Now then may I hope, that my request will not be rejected? Shall I be authorised to assure my friend of a welcome reception within these walls? Speak but one gracious word, and a few hours will be sufficient to bring her to your feet. Conducted by the good Abbot she has followed my steps hither, and I need only your

 permission

permission to deliver her up to your pr
tection."—

It is superfluous to say, that Herman
request was granted with readiness; b
how great was the emotion, which his na
rative had excited in his auditress, ho
ardent her impatience for the arrival of t
unhappy lady! She was unable to r
strain her tears, and a thousand joyful e
clamations escaped her lips, whose impo
was unintelligible to Herman.

—"Am I right," said he, "in su
posing, that my friend is not unknown
you?"—

—"Heaven grant, that it may pro
so," answered the Abbess, while she ha
ily wiped away her tears. "But as yet y
have allowed me so little insight into h
history, that I scarcely dare give credit

n

Oh! furnish me with more
e every thing that you know
nd prevent my nourishing the
ceitful dreams, which now oc-
ıcy. Alas! alas! it is impos-
ey should be verified; in pity
them at once, before these
ıave time to take such root in
hat to tear them out again
t break it."—
hat I know respecting this
ınswered Herman, "is, that
nured by her friends in the
St. Roswitha several months
atal conflagration. It was not
e she became acquainted with
s, which prevailed in this pol-
ıary. Luprian, the unworthy
urwald, who even under the

protecting roof of her father had insulted her by a declaration of his passion, renewed his persecution with increased ardour in a place, which was completely under his dominion. Much time was not suffered to elapse, before her resistance was punished by confinement in the cell, whence I released her: yet she was occasionally compelled to return to the Convent, in order that her virtue might be assailed by art, flattery, and every power of the most refined seduction, as well as by severity and persecution.

"The day preceding the dreadful night, in which these dwellings of sin were purified by fire, had witnessed such a scene of temptation, as Luprian thought could not possibly fail of success. But it was defeated in a manner so disgraceful for the

e enemies of innocence, that spite and
ry took the place of seduction and love.
he heroine was compelled to endure a va-
iety of the most cruel insults and injuries,
nd then was dragged back to her dun-
eon so exhausted with her sufferings,
hat she could scarcely be called alive.

"To her return to this prison was she
ndebted for existence. It was sunk so
leep within the earth and so remote from
he inhabited parts of the Convent, that
he only had a slight suspicion from dif-
rent circumstances, that something un-
sual was passing above her head. She
as confirmed in this idea by several days
apsing without any nourishment being
ought to her. She was reduced to the
eatest extremity; and hunger would
n have put a period to her sufferings,
when

when the prison-door was unlocked, and the Abbot entered. A cordial of great power, which he gave her, restored her strength sufficiently to enable her at length to comprehend the object of his visit. He first informed her of the events which had lately taken place, and then proceeded to propose to her the terms, on which she might obtain her liberty.

—"It is universally believed," said he, "that I, as well as the rest of my Order, have fallen a prey to the flames; I encourage this opinion, since it enables me with security to quit a profession, for which I am ill calculated, and which I have always held in detestation. I acknowledge it, my passion for you has hitherto been such, as you ought not to have complied with; but I now come to declare sentiments so

pure,

re, that you may safely listen to them hout doing the least injury to your iour. I have rescued the Abbey-trea- e from the ruins; I have also secured h considerable funds in other countries, will enable me to support the establish- nt of a temporal prince in any place ich you may prefer, provided it be one ere my person is not known. Nothing wanting to complete my happiness, ex- t the possession of your hand, and I st, you will not be so blind to your own rantage, as to reject my honourable t. But one choice is allowed you; ıer you must perish in this dungeon, ose existence is now a secret to every nan being except myself; or else you st take a solemn oath upon the cross to re my flight from Germany, and be-

come my wife, as soon as we are
some foreign climate. There is n
for deliberation; the success of my
depends upon their speedy executio
you must instantly and at once pro
the sentence, which decides both *yo*
and my own.—I wait your answer.

" That answer was such, as migh
been expected from one, by whom
centious Luprian was held in as mu
horrence, as virtue was held dear an
ized. She asserted the indissoluble
of his vows to religion, and repa
tender speeches with such scorn, t
left her with a threat never to repe
offer, but to suffer her to perish of h
without compassion or remorse. B
captive was too dear to him to perr
keeping that resolution. He torn

er with frequent visits, and desisted not rom his fruitless endeavours to reconcile her to his plans; though to her great satisfaction he was latterly compelled to abstain from entering her dungeon. A suspicion existed, that considerable treasures were buried among the ruins of the Monastery; it was therefore judged prudent to place sentinels about them, and thus was the execrable Monk debarred all intercourse with his prisoner, except such as could be carried on by favour of the iron grating.

"Luprian now found it absolutely necessary for him to visit Italy, where he ad deposited the chief part of his wealth. Ie entrusted the care of the lady to his sole onfident. As his absence was protracted nger than he had himself expected, she

enjoyed

enjoyed some respite from his infamous addresses, and was not without hopes, that her entreaties and sufferings would at last induce his representative to take some steps towards effecting her deliverance. Those hopes however were continually disappointed. His heart was not more flexible than his associate's; he remained immutably faithful to the trust reposed in him; and in answer to her enquiries respecting the transactions of the regions above her, he gave her such accounts of the successes of her enemies and of the destruction of all those who were dear to her, as almost extinguished her anxiety to escape from her dungeon. She saw, that nothing but sorrow would welcome her return to liberty, and the natural love of life struggled but faintly against the certainty of present

esent sufferings, and the apprehension those, which were still to come.

" Day after day crept away, during hich the dreadful uniformity of her unppy situation was uninterrupted, except r moments of utter despair, whose wer frequently was on the point of subing the poor prisoner; or else by those eams of ungrounded hope, with which ovidence strengthens and comforts those hom he means finally to preserve, in or- r that they may not quite sink beneath e burthen of their calamities. Luprian ill returned not: the lady's complaints emed gradually to make their impression i the mind of his deputy. He occasionly suffered hints to escape him, that it ould not be impossible to obtain his connt to her liberty: and at length at her earnest

earnest request he was induced to declare, that he was ready that instant to put an end to her sufferings, provided she would consent to share with him as his wife the enjoyment of that wealth, which the Abbot had placed in his custody.

" Here then her hopes again were disappointed. Vexation added bitterness to the manner, in which she indignantly rejected his infamous proposal: and the wretch, exasperated by her cutting expressions, swore, that he would put his plan in execution without her that very day, and would leave her to her fate. He kept his oath; and the captive must have perished, had not the Abbot fortunately returned at this identical moment. His expedition had been attended with nothing but disappointment. The wealth, which

which he had vested in foreign hands, had disappeared from a variety of causes, some through mischance, more through treachery; and he now only returned to find his associate fled, his treasure plundered, and his mistress as inflexible as ever. Vexation, poverty, and fatigue threw him on the bed of sickness. Many days frequently past, during which the captive was totally neglected; when at length her gaoler appeared, it was only to throw to her a loaf of that bread, of which he now could with difficulty procure a sufficiency for his own sustenance, and with every time to assure her, that this nourishment was the last, which she would ever receive from his hands. He spoke no longer of flight, or indeed of his passion for her; in truth, the former now seemed to be almost

most impracticable, for the rebuilding of the Monastery was begun; people were constantly employed in the neighbourhood of the dungeon's entrance; and the outlets from the rūins were watched with more vigilance than ever. The sufferer frequently entreated him to promise, that he would at least reveal to some one the place of her confinement before his death; since in order to increase her terrors he never mist an opportunity of assuring her, that he had not many days to exist. But in vain did she represent to him, that when he should be in another world, her sufferings in this could by no means be to him of any advantage: he was deaf to her supplications. Bitter and contemptuous irony was his only answer; and it seemed as if he solely enabled her to support life, in

order

at he might still have a human be-
is power to torment.

as about this time, that the vaults
r prison became an object of exa-
1: they were completely clogged
rubbish, except one narrow pass-
ducting to the grate. She had
termined on ending her sufferings
untary death, and for several days
in refusing sustenance; but now
frequently heard a noise above
, and even once or twice caught
n of distant torches through the
ning, her fearful resolutions were
e, and their place occupied by the
iat accident perhaps might effect
verance.

se hopes she concealed most sedu-
om her tyrant; and so often had

her

her sweetest dreams disappointed her, that despair still was able at times to regain his former influence over her mind. Yet she was now so accustomed to mark by some piteous sound, that there was a suffering creature buried in these caverns who implored assistance, that she continued her groans and cries, even when she had long given up the expectation of their reaching the ear of compassion. In truth, the workmen, during the intervals of their labours, had caught the faint murmurs of her complaints; but they put no other interpretations upon the sound, than such as were suggested by terror and superstition. Fortunately our enterprise necessarily brought us every day nearer the place of her seclusion; till at length some good Angel made me attentive to the cry of so

ow, and guided me to the performance f an action, which I shall never cease to onsider as the most blessed and fortunate vent of my whole life."—

Herman of Werdenberg here ended his ng narrative; the emotions which it had roduced in Helen were so violent, that very similitude would fall short of exressing their strength.

—"Emmeline!" said she in that interal voice, which is only audible to the ul, "thou liv'st then, and I shall once ore clasp to my bosom the poor forlorn rphan, the persecuted dove, the pious artyr of chastity and religion!—And erman is your deliverer! that very erman of Werdenberg, who once was njust to your merits, and who now (if I ay judge by every possible evidence)

adores you with the warmest, purest affection, ever kindled in the bosom of a mortal! Oh! Helen, Helen, what unexpected joy! You will see two of the best of human beings made happy after long and cruel sufferings, and will yourself assist in forwarding their happiness! My own plans of worldly bliss have all been ruined; in reward for my not murmuring at their destruction, grant me, ye powers of mercy, that wisdom and that foresight, which may enable me to establish the felicity of my friend on the firmest foundations and with the least delay."—

Herman was at a loss to comprehend the long silence of the Abbess, and the deep meditation, into which his narrative seemed to have plunged her. At length she

ıe recollected herself, and at her request e retired in search of the stranger, Helen aving previously stipulated that he should ıot be present at their meeting. She was ıot certain, that in the first moments of motion she should be sufficiently mistress of herself to conceal Emmeline's name; nd from what he had said, she collected, that it was not her friend's intention at present to discover herself to her deliverer.

A few hours elapsed, before Emmeline appeared leaning on the good Abbot: Helen now was no longer surprised, that in her present situation she had not been recognized by her former lover. She was sadly, sadly changed It was necessary to have been quite as lovely as Emmeline, in order not to have lost every charm of per-

son during the long and cruel period of her captivity; it was necessary to have possest as wonderful a strength of mind as hers, in order to escape with her senses unimpaired from the fearful shipwreck of all that was then most dear to her. Ah! Herman, Herman! that youthful vivacity, which appeared to you so high a crime, and for which you so unjustly blamed the innocent girl, was now fled for ever; its place was supplied by a mild and serious look of resignation, whose melancholy it's true was sometimes illumined by a benevolent smile; but the smile was but momentary, and its lustre soon faded away. Yet thus it was, that you wished her to be; and thus must Emmeline needs appear to you a thousand times more pleasing, than while she yet shone with all the brilliant

powers

wers of unfaded youth, vivacity, and auty.' Beautiful in truth was Emmeline o more; but Emmeline was still inteesting beyond expression. A slight frail ymph-like form, so light that it seemed s if air could have sustained her; a face, obbed of its roseate colour, but so dazling fair, that she resembled a marble atue; a countenance, from which a ainter might have formed a portrait of hristian Humility, and to which the conciousness of heroic self-denial and of long bstraction from all earthly hopes and leasures, had given a saint-like expression hat was almost supernatural; such now as the once brilliant Emmeline of Sarans!

But Helen did not make these observaions during the first moments of their

meeting; she could attend to nothing but the joy of once more embracing her persecuted friend, whom she prest to her bosom with pleasure too great for utterance. Emmeline was more composed; it was long since she had seen Helen, who had never been to her more than a beloved play-fellow, whom she sometimes remembered with a wish to meet again, and sometimes quite forgot in contemplation of nearer interests and impending dangers: but much more was she to Helen. The sufferings of amiable persons, with whom we have ever had even the slightest acquaintance, give them an extraordinary value in our eyes; and they inspire us with an affection for them which rises to the highest pitch, if we feel that it is at all in our power to show them kindness,

and

and to repair in some degree the past injustice of their fate.

What happened at this interview between the re-united friends; with what rapture Emmeline was received by the infirm Urania, whose life was now drawing towards its close; the recapitulation of what had past during their separation, and the plans which they arranged for the future; all this I shall pass over in silence, and shall only relate so much of the latter, as may be absolutely necessary. Time and grief had made alterations in Herman's appearance scarcely less surprising than in Emmeline's. His assumed name; his gentle manners softened by melancholy recollections and by compassion for the invalid, so different from the sternness and contempt with which he had ever treated

her at the Bishop's court; the dimness of her still-enfeebled sight; the darkened chamber, whose half-light only afforded her an indistinct view of her deliverer, when he visited her; these circumstances had contributed to conceal Herman from her knowledge, and she only entertained a suspicion, that the sound of his voice was not totally unknown to her. But she remarked his growing affection; and being unwilling to encourage it, she abstained from making those enquiries, which might perhaps have satisfied her curiosity, but which also might have led him to believe, that she was interested respecting him.

She was perfectly ignorant of all, that had passed during her captivity. She had given her gaoler's assertions implicit credit,

, and firmly believed, that the few per-
s whom she loved were numbered
ong the dead.—With what joy did she
r from Helen's lips the assurance, that
nalberga was alive and happy, and that
herself was indebted for her release to
other than Herman of Werdenberg!—
truth, she had hitherto been resolved
discourage the attachment of this un-
own warrior; but this resolution only
ted, till she discovered his real name.
esent gratitude and former affection
w gave him a double interest in her
art: yet did it not so totally overpower
other feelings, as to determine her to
get entirely the injustice of his former
nduct. She was resolved to put him to
evere trial; she was besides not quite
tain, that his ancient prejudices might

not still have some influence over him but a few conversations with the Knig were sufficient to efface every suspicion this subject. He frequently visited unknown mistress at the Convent-gra where (the better to elude a discover she never appeared without a veil: wi every visit his attachment evidently i creased in strength; yet even in her pr sence he frequently bestowed a sigh upo the rejected Emmeline, whom he nev mentioned but in terms of interest an compassion. This conduct was not with out its advantage, and when he was soo after compelled to fulfill his vow of assis ing in the crusade against the infidel Alb gese, he did not depart without hopes being welcome at his return.

During his absence the meeting too

place between Emmeline and her beloved sister. Helen had at length gained such perfect mastery over her feelings, as to endure without agony the presence of Torrenburg and the happy Amalberga; and she and Urania were the delighted witnesses of a scene, which appeared rather calculated for the regions of light beyond the grave, than for the habitation of wretched mortality. Amalberga, clasped in the arms of that sister, whom she had so long numbered with the dead; Torrenburg, Urania, and Helen, the spectators of and the partners in their joy; and then the relation of Emmeline's cruel sufferings; and then the description of Amalberga's unclouded happiness; and then the brilliant prospects for the future which displayed themselves to both, and which

for *this* time were no illusions ... No, I will not trust my feeble pen with the description!

The report soon circulated through the country, that the lost daughter of Count Donat was still in existence. The sisters shared the inheritance amicably, like two lovers dividing some scarce and delicious fruit, each anxious that the other should receive a full proportion. From every quarter of the free and happy Helvetia thronged the ancient friends of the family of Sargans to congratulate the co-heiresses. At length came also Herman of Werdenberg in quest of his unknown mistress, whom he understood to be resident at Sargans; he returned from his expedition, crowned with glory, and rewarded by the Pope with absolution from his sins; a fa-

ır, of which the pious warrior stood but
le in need. Count Torrenburg prof-
ed him the hand of his sister, of the
h heiress of Sargans, of her whose
auty had formerly fascinated his eyes;
t his heart was now possest by the poor
d friendless stranger, and the hand of
e rich heiress was respectfully declined.
dignation at this refusal was the reason
igned by Amalberga for the non-appear-
ce of her sister; the stranger however
s not equally invisible, though her veil
ıs not yet laid aside; and her consent
become his bride soon repaid him for
s constancy. It was not till the espous-
i had taken place, that she revealed to
m her real name, which Herman now
own wiser heard without repugnance;
r his early prejudices had at length lost
their

their influence in his bosom, and Emmeline's past sufferings left him no doubt respecting the purity of her future conduct. He believed, that he had plighted his faith to a needy friendless orphan; and the orphan in giving him her hand made him the powerful Lord of Upper-Carlsheim, of Ortenstein, and of many other fruitful territories. Happy were their days; happy was she through him, and he through her! He had found once more the long-lost jewel, of whose value he was so long unconscious; he had found the attachments of his early youth and of his maturer manhood, the choice both of his heart and of his head, and had found them all united in the person of his adored Emmeline!

And Helen was the spectatress of their felicity,

icity, nay is so still at the moment that race these lines! Dear as they were to r; so dear to her are still the sisters and eir worthy husbands!—Lo! how in this orld every thing passes away; God be anked for it, even our passions pass vay, as well as the rest. Tranquil age cceeds the impetuosity and hurry of outh; the summer, whose every day as disturbed by tempests, is replaced by e mild and mellow autumn.—Much as it d suffered, bitter as had been its disap-ointments, cruel as had been its sacrifices, ven the heart of Helen at length was at st.

All my friends still flourish; all who e dear to me still live, even the venera-le Urania. My native land smiles all round in blessed peace; not one of those,

who

who are near to my heart, has as yet been obliged to pay with his blood the price of precious Freedom! Guilt begins to be a stranger among our citizens; the dwellings of luxury and indolence are converted into sanctuaries of virtue and religion. The Monastery of Curwald has risen from its ashes with increased lustre; no Luprian, no Guiderius now rules there over proud voluptuous Monks; no sisters of Love * now inhabit the cells of the neighbouring Convent. The good Abbot John has admitted into his fraternity none but such men, as look on vice with no less detestation than himself; and their holy conduct has completely removed the stigma, which the remembrance of their abandon-

* Sorores Agapetæ.

ed

redecessors had fixed upon the whole
herhood of Cloister-Curwald.

the subterraneous vaults of Sargans
lerman lately raised a splendid monu-
t sacred to the sufferings of his wife.
ty silver lamps blaze before it; an
and unguarded entrance admits every
who chooses to approach it; and
e does many a pilgrim often loiter to
with pious admiration the history of
l living saint.

malberga was desirous of opening the
munication between the vaulted ca-
s and the south-western mountains,
re the fugitive Monks established their
nitage: but hitherto all attempts to
ver the outlet have been unsuccess-

The old Gertrude is no more; the
ntess Urania's age and infirmity for-
bids

bids her visiting the Castle; and the
rections, which her memory could
nish, are rendered of no avail,
vaults being completely altered in app
ance by the falling-in of the roof.
searches made on the outside of the mo
tain have been equally fruitless, nor
even the Hermitage itself been discove
Probably the holy Society has been
solved by death: Fame will not h
down their good works to the admira
of after-ages, but that is of but little
sequence; they stand inscribed in let
of flame in the book of the Everlastin

[ZABETH OF TORRENBURG

[CONTINUED.]

th, Countess of Torrenburg, to Count Oswald of March.

his, my dear brother, you must be l informed of the history of the La- Sargans, as myself; I am impatient w your opinion of these papers, and r the effect which they have pro- upon *your* mind is as strong, as that during their perusal I experienced ny own.—Yet that is impossible; culiar situation makes these annals essibly interesting to me; and did not

not the parchments, from which I hav copied them, bear unequivocal marks o their antiquity, I should suspect their hav ing been written for the purpose of being laid before me. While I read, I was half tempted to believe, that the good old Abbot, who recommended them to my notice, had inserted all those passages, which apply so well to my own situation, in order to lead me unconsciously to the point, where he has been labouring to place me; and if this were the fact, how would he triumph in the success of his design! But the circumstances of these memoirs are alas! but too authentic; as to their antiquity I have such proofs of it, that I would boldly match them against the title-deeds of my domains, and other old documents of that period, at which these annals are stated to have been composed.

Never

Nevertheless, feeling it to be of no ght importance to me to know, whether at I had read was authentic or a mere brication, I spared no pains to ascertain e fact. You are aware, that I became ssest of these writings by little better han a piece of theft; and in truth there ay be good reasons for not communicat- ng to one of the laity these papers, which ontain such frightful memorials of eccle- iastical guilt.—I could not therefore at- ack the Abbess on the subject directly; ut as in hopes of pacifying me for my isappointment she had proposed to relate ch particulars respecting the Ladies of argans, as were most worthy of my at- ntion, (an offer, which I at first rejected t of obstinacy, and through vexation at e denial of my request) I now sum-

moned

moned her to perform her promise, for the purpose of comparing what I should hear from her with the particulars contained in the stolen parchments.

The Abbess bestowed upon me a few hours every day in that closet, where the portraits of the Ladies of Sargans had first attracted my attention to those models of virtue and patient suffering: her account of them did not greatly vary from that, which I had already obtained. I confess, that where-ever a clerical person would have appeared in rather an odious light, whether it was a Monk or a Nun, a Bishop or an Abbess, the good lady never failed to soften matters and wrap the transgressors up carefully in the veil of mystery; but those examples of misfortune and heroic self-command, which appeared so peculiarly

arly applicable to myself, she confirm-
most fully, and exactly as I had read
m: nor can I decide, whether they
de most impression on me while read-
g them alone and for the first time by
e glimmerings of a midnight lamp, or
hen they were pronounced by the lips of
is holy woman, this earthly saint, whose
ad within a few short years (too soon
as! for those who like me know her
orth) will be crowned with wreaths of
lestial glory.

Though scarcely in the autumn of her
e, the excellent Abbess already stands
pon the brink of her grave. A slow con-
mption insensibly destroys her noble
owers, and the repetition of these ad-
entures was a real sacrifice which she
ade to friendship. Her present state

adds

adds weight to her testimony. you, Oswald, that so near the from time to eternity, she would away her hours in relating tales, she knew to be mere fabrications possible!

No! oh, no! What I have r true! The venerable Urania, on image my eye rests with such soft choly, and thou too, poor Adelaide, bitter fate beguiled me so often tears! you both once lived and su you both once thought and acted, as I have read and believed; and the amples of heroic patience, under affl far heavier than mine, shall serve guides in the conduct, which it nc comes me to pursue.

But for thee, generous Helen! fc

those fortune so thoroughly resembles my own, from this moment thou shalt be the model, after which I will form my whole heart and character; and when my resolution staggers under the weight of human weakness, to thy portrait will I turn my eyes for comfort and support.

My brother, I am convinced beyond the power of doubting, that Helen herself, and no other, was the authoress of the concluding manuscript. Every page of it betrays marks of an interest, which none but an actor in the tale could be capable of feeling; and oh! how much has this persuasion increased in my eyes the value of the writing!

At my request the Abbess pointed out to me Helen's picture; and such was my enthusiastic partiality, that I was weak

enough to fancy a striking likeness between her features, and those which my mirror shows me. I made the observation to my venerable friend; she assented to it with a smile, and added, "that it was not in person alone, that I resembled Helen of Homburg."—I started, and requested an explanation as to the parts of Helen's history, which were so like my own. Again the idea of an imposition flitted across my mind; I believed, what had passed between myself and Ida to be a total secret in the Convent; and if the Abbess was acquainted with my story, it was still possible, that all which I had heard from her had been dictated by Abbot Conrad. Her answer, however, soon removed this suspicion.

—"Helen," said she, "was not only fair,

illustrious, benevolent, and pious,
Elizabeth, but she was also learned
Her. I understand, that the exercise
your pen is your favourite amusement;
d there still exist writings of Helen,
ich are well deserving your attention,
d which I would willingly communicate
you, my dear Lady, had I not been po-
ively enjoined to the contrary by supe-
r orders."—

The recollection of my treachery forced
colour into my cheeks. To prevent my
nfusion being remarked, I hastened to
quire—"why I was prohibited this plea-
re, and who was my secret enemy?"—
e Abbess shook her head, and confest,
t the writings of ecclesiastical persons
quently contained circumstances im-

proper to be made known to the laity, for fear of giving a shock to their orthodox opinions.

—"But only resolve," she added smiling, "to become one of our Sisterhood, and when I die, I will bequeath you my station, and full permission to peruse all the manuscripts deposited in the spacious archives of this Convent."—

Ah! my dear brother, were Montfort a Torrenburg and Ida an Amalberga, how easy would it be for me to take such a step! But the ill opinion which I entertain both of Henry and his mistress, and my still lively sense of the perfidy and injustice with which they repaid my affection, will perhaps make me yet longer hesitate to act, as would best become me, and to follow

follow the glorious example of self-denial, set forth in Helen's conduct.—Farewell, dear Oswald; my heart is sad, but loves you tenderly.

Elizabeth of Torrenburg to Count Oswald.

I have confided my secret history to the Abbess. In whom can I more properly confide, than in her who will soon stand before the Almighty's throne, and before whose eyes all concealed things will soon be made manifest? To whom can I better apply for advice, than to a soul so near the boundaries of earthly being, that a ray of celestial light already illumines it, and enables her mental vision to see the things of this world in their proper likeness?

She is now informed of every thing; and I must acknowledge, I was frequently

embarrassed

barrassed by some questions, with ich she every now and then interrupt- my narrative.

—" Then you are certain, *quite* certain having been the first object of Mont- rt's affection?"—

—" I am to understand then, that the achment between you was equally rong, and that his whole soul was as uch devoted to you, as yours was to m?"—

" What? and could he really be so base to desert you at the very foot of the ar, merely because at that moment he ppened to be struck by the charms of e of your bridemaids? This seems to e very strange, my daughter; and me- inks, it does not well harmonize with e acknowledged probibity of Montfort's

former conduct.—If he had not loved you, to be sure he would not have persuaded you to fly with him from your brother's Castle—and yet, if I recollect right, you mentioned, that his carrying you off prevented your being compelled to espouse the aged Count of Torrenburg, who was then as much the object of your aversion, as (when his virtues became known to you) he was afterwards the object of your esteem?—You were young, amiable, in distress, partial to Montfort... it is very possible, that love induced him to advise your flight; but then again it is also possible, that mere sympathy and compassion *might* have led him to give the very same counsel, and to take the very same step."—

Such was the vexatious mode of arguing

; and of seeing things adopted by the
bess. I recapitulated the strong reasons
ich I had to believe, that in offering
e his hand Montfort was prompted by
fection.——The Abbess acknowledged
eir force; but she added—" that it was
ry easy for that, which was at *first* no-
ing more than compassionate interest
t the beautiful Elizabeth, to be in time
verted into love."—

This compliment so ill-timed put me
ore out of patience, than her humili-
ing questions and remarks. It was with
fficulty, that I concealed my ill-humour,
d hastily endeavoured to change the
bject of our discourse.

Alas! my dear brother, every one seems
) be in Montfort's interests, and averse
) mine. The decision of my venerable

counsellor Albert Reding has just been communicated to me, and I find.... But I will not repeat to you, what he says: what do wealth and power, what do vassals and domains concern me now?—My peace is fled, my heart is broken!—

The Abbess was not easily persuaded to quit the subject: and at length she put some enquiries, which cut me to the very heart.—They regarded the friend and companion of my earliest youth, the worthy Richard of Ulmenhorst, whose love I had rejected, solely influenced by my partiality for Montfort. I was thrown into such confusion by this unexpected home-attack, that.... I set all politeness fairly at defiance, and without replying, abruptly spoke upon another subject.

We were sitting in the Abbess's private

et; and I now compelled those ports, which had at first excited my curio- respecting the secrets of this Convent, furnish me with an excuse (good or d) for eluding questions, which I felt t little inclination to answer.

—"Holy Mother," said I, "among the histories respecting the Ladies of rgans which you have related, there is e still unknown to me. You have al- ys past over the picture, which repre- its two female pilgrims, bewildered ong the barren wilds of a snow-covered ountain; a picture, which when I first ered this room, drew more of my at- tion, than any of its companions. I at it believed them to represent the unfor- nate sisters, Emmeline and Amalberga; t I do not recollect to have heard (I

had nearly said " to have *read*") any circumstances in their history according with the scene before me. How anxiously they seem to be looking for the right path!—Good Mother, inform me, whether they found it, and what untoward accident brought them into their present distress? You really must make me better acquainted with their adventures, for my whole heart already speaks in their favour."—

—" Does it in truth?" said the Abbess, smiling at my eagerness. " Oh! that good heart!—But look at the picture nearer: see, whether you can find in the countenances nothing to justify your partiality, except the expression of distress?"—

I drew near, and examined the picture carefully; but I soon turned away again, and

d felt, that my cheeks were burning; in
ith something till then unobserved
uck me in the features, but the effect
oduced was by no means pleasing.

—"Well!" enquired the Abbess; "have
u discovered any thing?"—

—"That general family-likeness," I re-
ed carelessly, "which is peculiar to the
use of Sargans. But I entreat you,
other, inform me, who do those figures
present?"—

—"Two innocent and unfortunate
ters," was the Abbess's answer, "driven
m their proper station, and compelled
en to conceal their very names by a suc-
sion of untoward circumstances, not by
y fault of their own committing. I could
l you much respecting them, that per-
ps would not appear to you uninterest-
ing;

ing; but I am too weak to undertake th
task at present. However, not to leav
your curiosity quite unsatisfied, such a
account of them as exists in our arch
ives shall be looked out, and delivered t
you in the course of this evening. Pro
bably, you will find this narrative more in
structive, and in every respect better wort
your inspection, than those which I am
compelled to withhold from you, since th
latter were written by Females but littl
skilled in literature; while the history, o
which I speak, was transmitted to poste
rity by the learned pen of an Abbot o
Cloister-Curwald."—

—"Of Curwald?" I repeated, with
smile of contempt and incredulity.

—"Nay, nay, good Countess," said th
Abbess with some warmth; "no preju
judice

judices, I implore you! The author of that manuscript, a copy of which I propose entrusting to you, was no Guiderius, no Luprian, believe me! No, daughter, he was one of the wisest and holiest men of the age, in which he lived; a man in short, whose virtues conferred honour on the rank of a prelate, and who was in fact, as well as in name, a true dignitary of the church."—

I am now waiting in momentary expectation of receiving the promised manuscript. The situation, in which I exist at present, is such, as makes it necessary for me to seize every means of diverting the natural current of my thoughts into a different channel: it is to this necessity, that a great portion must be ascribed of the impatience, with which I look forward to the *arrival of this* narrative.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth of Torrenburg to Count Oswald.

I have received the manuscript; I have read it, and have read it more than once. —I send it to *you*, my brother; read it, as *I* have done; feel, what *I* have felt; then will nothing surprise you which you may hear, respecting the actions of your sister

ELIZABETH.

PART THE SIXTH.

E SISTERS WITHOUT A NAME.

ten by the Abbot of Cloister-Curwald.

ove a century has passed away, since
st heroines of that family, to whose
I am preparing to add, quitted the
f human action. I say, the *last*, be-
no accounts exist of their successors;
uring that long and vacant period,
nows, but that many excellent per-
nay have acted in a manner which did
to their ancestors, though no writ-
r traditional memorial remains to
communicate

communicate to posterity their virtues and their woes, their trials and their victories? My heart delights in the tale, which records examples of heroic excellence; and I have frequently censured the indolence of cotemporary writers, for suffering this period to remain a blank. Lest I should deserve that censure myself, which I have not scrupled to inflict upon others, I now take up my pen, and proceed to execute a task, which (should I live to finish it) will, I trust, rescue from oblivion some circumstances well-deserving to be remembered. What I shall set down will be truth, pure unadorned truth. A just cause demands not the aid of ornament; and should these leaves ever meet the eye of persons, who may think themselves more nearly interested in their

contents

contents than others, let them not for an instant suspect, that one syllable is either inserted or retrenched upon *their* account, or with a view to produce any other sentiment in their bosoms, than a conviction of the truth. It is not before *their* tribunal, that I plead the cause of two unfortunates, but before that of the whole world: I write not for them, whose prejudices may perhaps make them refuse to peruse more than a few pages of this narrative, and who may close their eyes obstinately against the light, which shews them that, which they are unwilling to see. No; I write for impartial judges, and will state my case with as pure and rigid fidelity, as were I stating it to the ear of Heaven.

In the tranquil vales, which bordér the lakes of Thun and of the Four Cantons,

those

those lakes where Helvetian Liberty first threw her fetters away, still do the families exist of those best friends of their native country, the Melthals, the Forests, the Bernsdorfs, and the Tells. Their different branches have spread themselves on all sides, and almost form a little nation of their own; whose sons and daughters, even in a land where honour, bravery, and truth are so universal, still distinguish themselves from their compatriots by the uperiority of their virtues. It were an easy task for me to point out many Williams, Walters, and Henrics, many Gertrudes and Amabels in this amiable community, so perfectly have the good qualities of their fore-fathers been inherited by their children: but at present I shall only mention the inhabitants of one

particular

rticular house, which sheltered the in-
ncy of the heroines of my tale.

'Twas the peaceful cottage of a younger
illiam and a younger Amabel, the de-
endants of that Tell, who offered up the
rant Gessler as a sacrifice to the insulted
erties of Helvetia: here among a crowd
blooming sons and daughters two love-
girls were remarked, whose appearance
ade it evident, that their origin was not
e same with that of their play-mates. It
true, that they called themselves their
ters, and were persuaded, that in fact
ey were so; but yet the truth was quite
herwise. The real children of the fa-
ily were healthy and strong like the ge-
rality of their kindred; but these two
rls were fair and delicate, and rather re-
mbled beautiful exotic plants surround-

ed

ed by meadow flowers, to which they descended to allow the honour of a con origin: and however they might t selves esteem the merits of these si children of nature, to all other eyes i plain, that their own perfections wer superior.

I have entitled this narrative "Sisters without a Name," for it was before they knew the family, from w they sprung; and when it was at le revealed to them, they found, that rights were in the possession of stran Nay, at the moment that I am wri they are still denied the privilege of ca themselves by the name of an illust House, whose dignity would be disgr by the inferior station, in which the at present compelled to exist.

In the early and happiest period of their lives, the Sisters were totally unconscious of the magnitude of their claims, and their minds encouraged no wish to be greater than they were. Happy in the humble sphere for which they believed themselves ordained, happy in the shades of their mountains, in the tranquillity of their flowery vallies and glassy lakes, they considered the scenes which surrounded them, and which appeared to them so enchanting, as a beautiful specimen of the whole world; nor did they ever trouble their heads with a thought, whether beyond those mountains, and on the outside of those vallies, there existed objects which were deserving of a wish to be acquainted with. This fortunate unconsciousness was assiduously preserved in their minds

by

by those, to whose care they were confided; and on winter-evenings, when William Tell had collected all his children around him (among whom the Sisters were still reckoned) the stories, with which he entertained them, always respected some hero or heroine of ancient Helvetia; so that nothing was made known to them except the country which gave them birth, and they were led to consider nothing as of importance but what related to that country, because of that country alone had they ever been told any thing important. In the same manner were they instructed respecting the concerns of human life: every illustration was selected from the lower or middling classes of society; and the manners and customs of the great would have been totally unknown to them,

had

had it not been for an old man, over whose head near a century had past, and who was a member of the happy family, in which the Sisters resided. This good father would often take the two girls apart from their playmates, and recount to them particulars of the ancient Houses of Carlsheim, Torrenburg, and Homburg. Mary and Rosanna (so were the Sisters called, while under Tell's roof) listened to him with the greatest interest, and each selected a heroine from among the Helens, Emmelines, and Uranias, as the object of her peculiar admiration.

But such ladies of those illustrious families, as had finished their lives in a cloister, were sure of obtaining the favour of the gentle serious Mary. She was not fourteen, when she made a pilgrimage to the

Convent of Engelberg for the purpose kissing the stone, on which Amalberga v kneeling, when surprised by Landenber emissaries; and she frequently expres a wish, that she might one day be perm ted to take the veil in that Convent, whi had so long given shelter to the heiress Sargans.

The laughing Rosanna often added this wish an assertion, that her sist hoped like Amalberga to exchange in d time the cloister for a bridal garland; b Mary's conduct sufficiently proved, tl her religious vocation was at that time affectation. She was just sixteen, wh William Tell was obliged to comply wi her entreaties, and suffer her to reside Engelberg. He seemed to consent to tl step unwillingly: but he comforted hi

elf with the reflection, that the rules of this House permitted no one to pronounce the irrevocable vow, who had not completed her twenty-fifth year; a period, before whose arrival a thousand accidents must necessarily have taken place, capable of shaking the most determined resolutions and the most ardent zeal.

Rosanna accompanied her sister to the Convent, and for a few days forced herself to be pleased and satisfied with the religious tranquillity of her new abode. But at length she could no longer conceal from herself, that nothing save Mary's society could have made the manners of a convent endurable; and that in fact she was much better calculated for singing and dancing with her young companions on the village green, than for attending the

Abbess and her Nuns to the midnight mass. She therefore endeavoured to give her occupations some variety by taking an active part in the internal arrangements of the Convent.

Rosanna was beautiful, but as yet no one had told her so. None of the neighbouring youths pleased her enough to make any impression upon *her*, and the consequence was, that her charms made but little impression upon *them*. With all her vivacity, there was a certain something in Rosanna's manner, which kept the multitude in awe. Every one admired her, wished her well, was pleased to see her join in their amusements, but she produced no warmer sentiment. A kind of dignity, of which she was herself unconscious, prevented the young men from being

ing as much at their ease with her, as ith her companions, and kept even the ost abashed of them at a distance: at ength the society was increased by the arival of a person, who only required to be een, in order to inspire her with a wish to btain from him something more than inifference, or mere dispassionate approbaion.

The ancient friendship established beween the families of William Tell and Ienric Melthal was kept up by their deendants in all its original vigour. A son f that Alwyn Melthal, who played the hief part at the capture of Rassburg, was till alive, and nearly of the same age with that old relation of William Tell, whom I formerly mentioned. Both these venerable men were still fresh and hearty in spite

of their advanced time of life; such is in deed the natural effect of breathing the pure mountain air, and living far from the vices and excesses of cities. The two families often met together, and their days of festivity were always observed in common.

Old Melthal had several children; but now it was rumoured, that one of them called Erwin (whom no one recollected to have ever heard of before) was just returned from foreign parts, and that a great feast was shortly to be given in honour of his safe arrival. Accordingly, the venerable chief of the Melthals made a tour through the neighbouring districts, for the purpose of inviting his relations and intimates to assemble on the green lawn before his house on an appointed

pointed day; thence to accompany his newly-arrived son to the old church on the banks of the Lake, and return thanks to Heaven for his prosperous return; and finally, to pass the remainder of the day and a good portion of the following night at his expence in various festivities and amusements.

Tell's family was one of the first invited: the expectation of the approaching entertainment gave a look of joy to every countenance. In the great world, no one looks forward to a day marked out for some amusement with half this enthusiasm: the hurry of tiresome and expensive preparations; recollections, how often on similar occasions we have expected more amusement, than we received; the frequent recurrence of such pleasures,

which robs them of the charm of novelty; the suggestions of mortified vanity or dissatisfied pride; all these combine to embitter the festivals of the great. But here in the land of innocence and gaiety, here where no one looks for any pleasure, but that which he is sure of finding; where pride and vanity have nothing to do; where every recollection is delightful, and the whole expence and preparation consist in a wreath of fresh-gathered flowers; here it is, that an invitation to a party of pleasure is really welcome, and seldom fails of justifying its name.

The sun was not yet risen, and the youths and damsels of Tell's family were already on their road to Melthal's cottage. Lots were cast among the girls to decide, who should have the honour to conduct the

the procession; the chance fell upon Rosanna. In consequence, she added to that which confined her locks, a second wreath of flowers which she hung round her arm, ready (as was the custom on such occasions) to crown the hero of the entertainment. It was a special privilege enjoyed by that company of young people, which arrived first at the place of rendezvous, that a similar garland to that, with which themselves were adorned, should ornament the head of the principal personage, whereas the garlands of the others could only be worn by relations of that particular family; and this privilege was one, which they valued highly.

Tell's children, therefore, entreated their sister Rosanna to hasten forwards, in order that no one might arrive before them;

and obliging as she ever was, she quickened her steps, though solely from the desire to comply with their wishes: for she little guest the sort of youth, for whom her garland had been woven. She expected to see a person, who would be as indifferent to her as all those were, whom she had already seen; and it was a matter of little concern to her, whether she ornamented with her garland the locks of the young Melthal, or of one of her own relations.

But how were her sentiments changed, when at the head of her company she arrived on the brow of a little hill, and looked down upon Melthal's cottage! There sat the old man on a stone bench before the door; and near him stood a youth, whose countenance was illumined by the rosy light of the rising sun, and

whose figure excelled in manly beauty every thing that she had ever seen, nay that she had ever thought or dreamt of.—She started back.

—"What!" said she to herself; "can this be a son of the old Henric Melthal? No, no! 'tis certainly some angel, or some saint or martyr at the least. In truth, I never saw one of the beings, to whom those names are applied; but I have been told much respecting such supernatural Existences, and surely if they ever deign to visit the earth in human form, they must needs resemble yonder youth."—

Erwin Melthal appeared to be in earnest conversation with his father: but no sooner was he aware of the approaching guests, than he hastened towards them, and delivered a welcome with such unaf-

fected grace and easy dignity, that Rosanna's delight and astonishment were raised to the very highest pitch.

Tell's family was in fact the first arrived, and Rosanna's garland was without a competitor for the honour of adorning Erwin's head; an honour, which she now no longer looked upon as a matter of indifference, and which she could not have consented to make over to one of her companions without some little movements of jealousy and dissatisfaction.

She approached the stranger, while her cheeks were suffused with blushes, and her hand trembled, as she drew the garland from her arm. He stood before her like some well grown cedar, and bowed down his head a little to be crowned by the lovely stranger. She hesitated, retired

few steps, and looked anxiously round to her female companions, as if she would willingly have given up her office to one of them: while Erwin, either out of respect and admiration at the heavenly vision which now stood manifest before him, or from the more earthly consideration of the difference between her stature and his own, sank upon one knee before her, and in this attitude was crowned by her trembling hands.

It was an established custom, that the conductress of the first company that arrived, on these occasions should be the partner of the king of the festival during the whole of the day. Rosanna, who loved to enjoy the earliest breath of morning and the glories of the rising sun, had already frequently obtained this privilege without

without its causing her much emotion; but now when she reflected, that for a whole day she should be by the side of Erwin Melthal; that she should kneel on the same step with him at church; should join at the same time and almost in the same breath with him in the most solemn offices of devotion; should blend her voice with his in prayers and anthems; and that at table, in the dance, at every kind of festivity, she should still have no associate but Erwin, all this was too much for her to conceive at once, and her feelings scarcely permitted her to breathe.

Still she only dared to express those feelings by looks and blushes: but Erwin, who felt the same, was not confined like her by the restraints of decorum. He made use of the privilege of his sex, and

not

t only spoke, but spoke so plainly, that
he as Rosanna was skilled in the lan-
age of love, which she then first heard
m his lips, she still understood his
aning; and little as she ventured to an-
er, still before the entertainment con-
ded, she had left no doubt upon his
nd, that their affection was mutual. The
barrassment, which took place at their
st meeting; the gift of her garland; the
ligious ceremonies in which they had been
gaged together, and in which each had
den a little from that which was destined
r Heaven, for the purpose of bestowing
on the other; all these circumstances
d a thousand other trifles, which occur-
d in the course of the entertainment, as-
red them, that an exchange of hearts
d taken place, that their sentiments

were

were sanctioned by the approbation Heaven, and that every thing would t out as they wished and expected.

From this day forwards Erwin's lei was totally engrossed by Rosanna. habitations of Tell and Melthal were so very distant, but that by setting ou the same time the lovers were certai meet half way, time enough to pass s hours together undisturbed: besides intimate connection, which subsisted tween the two families, furnished too m opportunities of intercourse, to admi their often complaining of long abse from each other. The passion, wh grew stronger in their bosoms with ev hour, was carefully concealed from ev one; not that they had any reason to prehend censure from their superiors;

beca

because secrecy seemed to give an additional charm to the correspondence of their hearts, and because the goal of their desires seemed to be still at a considerable distance.

The venerable Melthal, the youth's great-grandfather, had caused him to be educated in a foreign country, and intended him for the profession of arms. Erwin had been long suffered to remain ignorant, both to what family he belonged, and to what country he owed his origin: but the good antient (whom the number of his years rather than any sensible infirmity made conscious, that the close of his existence could not be far removed) now thought proper to summon his grandson to a private conference, in which he disclosed to him many particulars of great importance.

—" One

—"One more campaign," said Erwin to his mistress, the first time that he saw her after holding this conversation with old Melthal, "one more campaign under the Emperor's banners, in whose service I am at present engaged; and then will I hasten back to lay my laurels at the feet of my Rosanna, confess my love for her, and fix my habitation with her in that quarter of the globe, which her fancy shall prefer. If she thinks proper still to reside in the shades of her native vallies, there too will I take up my abode: if she rather desires to see the world (which in truth has its charms and can show some scenes, with which even these enchanting solitudes must not come in competition) perhaps her happy Erwin may succeed in procuring for her there a situation better suited to her

her merits, than that which she must fill in the obscurity of these retired mountains."—

—"Dear Erwin," interrupted Rosanna, "speak no more of this; speak not of my merits, or of removing me to the great world! Ah! why must you needs yourself go thither? Is it not enough to make me hate that world, that it soon must rob me of your society? and alas! who knows, whether you will return from that wild tumult, which I only know by description, with sentiments as kind and as honest and true an heart, as you will bear away with you!"—

Poor Rosanna was bathed in tears, while she made these representations. She had had dreams, and omens, and forebodings, which promised nothing good, and

and which her lover soon banished by means, which every lover (the false as well as the true) equally practises on similar occasions. But Erwin was true as the truest; and his oaths were heard and registered in the Book of Eternity by the Angel, who suffers no perjury to escape unpunished.

There was one person in the world, with whom Rosanna had been too long accustomed to share all her joys and all her sorrows, all her hopes and all her fears, not to make her feel uneasy under the profound secrecy, which she had hitherto imposed on herself respecting her attachment: that person was Mary. In fact, she had already suffered some distant hints to escape her, that she had a secret to communicate; and at length she summoned

up

up all her resolution, and (with Erwin's approbation) set forward one morning for the Convent of Engelberg, determined to lay her whole heart open to her sister's inspection.

Though Mary found her own felicity within the bounds of cloistered retirement, her notions were too liberal to make her consider it as improper, that Rosanna should seek for happiness in the arms of an affectionate husband. With folded hands and a countenance bright with tranquil joy, she piously invoked a blessing on her sister's union with the honest-hearted Erwin; though she could not help lamenting with a sigh, that he should have adopted the profession of Blood! Before they separated, it was settled between the Sisters, that on an appointed day Rosanna should

conduct

conduct her lover to the Convent, in order that Mary might become personally acquainted with her future brother.

This interview was not difficult to be procured; Mary had not yet pronounced her vows, and was left at perfect liberty to employ her time, as she thought proper. Yet partly from a wish to make the business no more public than could be avoided, and partly from a movement of religious enthusiasm which forcibly operated upon her imagination, Mary desired, that the meeting should not take place, till the evening was on the point of closing.

It was in autumn, and the weather proved gloomy. Mary had provided herself with a key of the Chapel, and it was in this awful place, that she received the lovers. A small porch, faintly lighted by

the

glimmerings of a distant lamp, wit-
ed their first meeting. Mary (who
ite of her extreme youth had already
ted the dignity and grave character
priate to her destined station) spoke
and seriously to the warrior, respecting
ncerity of his attachment and the sa-
nature of his engagement to Rosan-
His answers were such as she most
ed to hear; and she now conducted
into the Chapel, where she had al-
placed two burning tapers before an
consecrated to Saint Engeltruda.

"Kneel," said she, "kneel upon
stone, on which Amalberga was
ling when seized by the sacrile-
Landenberg; kneel, and swear in
resence of God and of this chapel's
n-Saint, never even in thought to
swerve

it contracted from the impure ste
virgin's ravisher!—May Landenb
be thine, Erwin, shouldst thou
one instant prove faithless to Ro
Never may'st thou, Rosanna, fi
time of need such a preserver as
ga found in Eginhart, shouldst t
forget the man, to whom I now
betroth thee in the face of
Heaven.—Let nothing part you,
grave!—And should hereafter
you from inconstancy or capri

ful, and warn you to return to the
ths of propriety and duty!—But peace,
erlasting peace be with the bosoms of
th, and may the wings of angels over-
read them and preserve them!"—

Erwin and Rosanna, as they gazed on
e lovely form, which stood before them
uminated by the pale light of the conse-
ted tapers, fancied themselves in the
esence of some celestial being. They
ought, that in her words they heard the
ice of her Patron-Saint; they swore
elity while life should last, and Mary
ssed and blessed them.

She then accompanied them to the
apel-porch; and the betrothed or rather
e espoused lovers (for as such they now
nsidered themselves) bent their course
mewards beneath a sky heavy with

the dews of an autumnal evening. Not one syllable did they exchange, as they past along; a gentle pressure of the hand occasionally was the only manner, in which they gave token of their feelings. Yet was their joy not quite unclouded; a secret heaviness weighed down their hearts: melancholy forebodings forbade their abandoning themselves entirely to the delightful thought—"We are united for ever!"—

The three actors in this solemn and singular scene had not enveloped their secret in so impenetrable a veil, as they imagined; and this transaction was the means of their meeting with many severe reproofs from those, to whom they were in subjection. The youthful devotee had been watched by an inquisitive Nun; and the respect-

able

e, which she had thought proper
m on this occasion, was made
o the Abbess the next morning.
vere the censures past by that
y on Mary's boldness, in assum-
racter so ill adapted to her time
On the other hand, each of the
as closeted by the chief of their
e families; and many representa-
e laid before them in these private
ces, which seemed to make great
on on the minds of both, though
l not the smallest effect in dimi-
their mutual attachment. At
st meeting Erwin revealed not to
one word of the conversation,
e had held with his grandfather
; neither on *her* side was Rosanna
mmunicative of the information,

which she had gained from the old William Tell. They only confest to each other, that the main-topic of both these secret conferences had been reasons for their renouncing their so lately contracted union; and the question was exchanged—"Whether what each had heard, but which neither revealed, was of such force, as to authorize their breaking vows, which had been pronounced with such solemnity"—"No!"—uttered in a tone so positive, as to convey in it a renewal of all their former oaths, was the reply on both sides: yet they agreed to commit their cause to Heaven and Time, and to suffer, to hope, and to believe, what (in secret each was compelled to own) appeared then to be impossible.

That Erwin and Rosanna were mutually attached

ched to each other, had been long sus-
ted; but the fact was now made
wn throughout the Province, and the
judice ran universally in favour of the
ers. The youths and damsels exclaim-
loudly against the severity of the two
hers; and even the old people shook
ir heads, and let a few words escape
em now and then about inexplicable ob-
nacy. They declared, that Melthal's
and Tell's daughter seemed to be form-
for one another, that they ought to be
ted, and that united they would be
ne day or other, happen what might.
enever they encountered the dejected
ers, they never failed to whisper some
d exhortations to be faithful, and to
e for better times; while on the other
d their young companions were an-

xious to furnish them with opportunities of meeting, and frequently in their village festivals the lovers suddenly found themselves encircled by the same chain of flowers, and heard every voice unite in singing the praise of their tender attachment and their wishes for its happy issue. A thousand ballads were made upon them, some plaintive, some gay, and they circulated from mouth to mouth with rapidity; for the love of Erwin and Rosanna was an affair, in which the whole Province felt itself interested.

This universal good-will, however, advanced their cause but little. When they were alone, each spoke of eternal fidelity and insurmountable difficulties; each made it evident, that a secret sorrow weighed heavy upon the heart; each found

mind fault with the father of the other, had declared him to be extremely in the wrong; while the father of the speaker was asserted to be perfectly in the right, at the same time that to obey him was acknowledged to be impossible. As to the two old men, they took no steps towards an explanation. It was rather observed, that from this time forward they shunned each other's society, and seemed by the mutual distance thus suddenly created between them, to give their children a hint of the conduct, which they expected them also to adopt.

Sooner than they were aware, chance relieved them from the troublesome employment of watching over the lovers. Erwin was unexpectedly summoned to join the Emperor's army, and the orders

were so pressing, as not even to permit his taking leave of his mistress. Yet as he past by it on his road, he said a short but fervent prayer in the Chapel of Engelberg; he commended himself and his fortunes to the protection of that Saint, who had heard his vows pronounced; and Mary being fortunately among the Nuns, and within reach of his eye, he implored her by signs to bear his melancholy greeting to her sister. Mary perfectly understood the meaning of those signs; though it was long, before an opportunity presented itself for complying with his wish. Ever since her culpable interference in unhallowed love-affairs, the virtuous Lady Abbess had caused a strict watch to be kept over Mary; and though Rosanna's heart was full and greatly needed the consolations

consolations of a sister's tenderness, she still hesitated to visit Engelberg. The secret, which the old Tell had revealed to her, was a dead weight upon her heart; she knew well, that it was her duty to make it immediately known to Mary, who was no less interested in it than herself; and she trembled to hear the decision, which (she doubted not) would be pronounced even by her truest friend and the partial favourer of her love, as soon as she should be made acquainted with the real nature of the case.

The useful art of penmanship, which a century before had been familiar in these parts, and practised by persons totally unconnected with learned pursuits, even by women, (as the annals of the Ladies of Sargans testify,) at the present period

was fallen into neglect. With the exception of some few characters of distinguished merit, it was confined to the clergy; and alas! in this respect Erwin and Rosanna were completely laical: neither was it safe or prudent to confide their tender secrets to the discretion of chance messengers; and it necessarily followed, that the lovers were but seldom informed of the proceedings of each other. Common fame however occasionally brought the maid tidings of her warrior not less strange than satisfactory; and the girls of the Valley frequently were able to comfort their sorrowing companion with reports, which asserted Erwin's heroism to be only equalled by his good fortune. Rosanna's heart readily gave credit to assertions so flattering; and she

was too well disposed to believe them, to require much proof of their veracity; nay, she sometimes was so completely fascinated by the illusions of Fancy, that she could not refrain from communicating her hopes to the venerable Tell.

—" Surely, my good father," would she say to him, " should Erwin return to me crowned with honour and renown; should he be really what Fame asserts, the favourite of his Emperor, what is more probable, than that the lowness of his origin should be sunk in the splendour of some new-acquired title, and his merits be rewarded by his elevation to some station of importance? and in that case, where would be the impropriety of my giving him my hand? and what obstacle would my mother's injunctions oppose any longer to our *union* ?"—

The old man on hearing such observations never failed to exclaim against the credulity of young minds, and to warn the exulting girl against the painful effect, which evil tidings would produce upon her mind with as much facility and with still greater violence. They say, that Age often possesses the gift of second-sight; it is at least certain, that what Tell foreboded, happened but too soon. On a sudden, Rosanna's Companions greeted her arrival no more with chearful songs of encouragement and hope; the name of the heroic Erwin now was never suffered to pass their lips; when she enquired, whether no tidings of him had reached the Valley, her question was evaded. At length the deep mourning, in which the Melthal family appeared, made public the

tidful intelligence, which her friends
d so long concealed from her, and the
ation of which struck her senseless to
: earth, as if it had been a flash of light-
ng. Erwin had accompanied his sove-
gn to relieve the Fortress of Zender,
ich was besieged by Sultan Amurath,
l in an unsuccessful attack upon the
my's camp had fallen as became a war-
r. The whole Valley was afflicted at his
s; the old Melthal was insonsolable.
ortly afterwards he left his home to
it the Castle of a nobleman, who had
n long his patron and his friend, and
returned no more. Death surprised
n on his journey; and his children
ought nothing back but his bones, which
y buried in his native land, that land
ich through life he had ever loved so
arly!

It seemed, as if at this period every ki
of misfortune had conspired to ruin t
once so happy Province. It was visit
by continual storms, such as had never l
fore taken place within the memory
man: the mountain-torrents deluged t
country with unusual fury; nor was
possible for the cultivators, industrious
they were, to bring their ruined fie
into order again, till a considerable ti
had elapsed. The crops failed; pri
rose; at length the distress became u
versal, and it was soon followed by t
twin-sisters of Death, Famine and D
ease.

Rosanna saw so many of the venera
fathers of the Valley sink into the gra
and wept over the tombs of so many of l
youthful friends, that she could not l
exp

expect the lot soon to fall upon herself and her good old grandfather. The first was as earnestly desired by Her, who languished to embrace her Erwin in the land of shadows, as the latter was looked forward to with terror. She anxiously wished to lengthen the days of one, who was now almost her only friend, and she implored him to retire for a while from a spot become so dangerous. It was not far from Tell's habitation to the Convent of Engelberg, and there the plague had not as yet commenced its ravages. Mary obtained permission from the Abbess to take possession of an uninhabited monastery, which made part of the domains of Engelberg; and she now hastened like some benevolent Angel to guide her sickening relations to the place of refuge, which she had

had found for them, and where she proposed to be their nurse herself. As many as were still capable of moving, blest her, and followed her to the Monastery; Rosanna and Tell made part of the melancholy caravan, which Death had taken care to prevent from being numerous. In defiance of the extreme danger, Mary resided with them, and administered to their necessities with her own hands. Her exertions were crowned with their deserved success; she had the happiness of rescuing all her patients from the grave, except the grey-headed Tell. Yet even He did not fall a martyr to the plague; Mary's unceasing efforts had relieved him from that poisonous enemy; but the weight of near an hundred years prest him down, and forbade his ever rising

again

ain from that bed, from whose side, du-
ig the time of his most imminent dan-
r, he had vainly entreated Mary and her
er to retire and attend to their own
servation.

—" My children," said he at length,
en no doubt remained that the hour of
death was at hand, " I feel, that we
st part: and long as my worldly course
lasted, still at its close does nothing
ss heavy on my heart except the re-
tion, that I leave your fate and fortunes
decided. Rosanna, have you commu-
ated to your sister those circumstances,
ich I thought fit to lay before you, in
er that you might be convinced, that
nion with Erwin Melthal would be ill-
ed and improper in every point of
w?"—

Rosanna

Rosanna replied in the negative; she had of late found but few opportunities, she said, of seeing her sister; and even when they were together, the Lady Abbess (whose notions of decorum had been greatly shocked at the share, which Mary had taken in the Chapel-scene) had watched them with such vigilance, as effectually prevented any confidential communications. She concluded her apology for having so long neglected to obey his injunctions, by entreating him to suffer Mary to retain the pleasing illusion that she had a right to his affection; an illusion, with which she herself had parted so unwillingly.

—"It must not be," answered the expiring Tell; "it is necessary, that both of you should be aware, that you are no

grand-

ndchildren of mine. The story of
ur birth is long; Rosanna is informed
all the circumstances, and will relate
em to you, my gentle Mary, at some
ure of leisure: at present learn from me
ch points, as are most essential.

"You and your sister are the sole re-
ining descendants of the younger
nch of the ancient and illustrious fami-
of Carlsheim and Sargans. That you
ve past so large a portion of your lives
obscurity, and that your great expecta-
ns are still in so questionable a state,
u must accuse the superstitious obsti-
cy of the Countess, your deceased mo-
er. She was a daughter of the Count
Mayenfield, and her extraordinary
auty made her the object of universal
miration. Among her suitors were
numbered

numbered the heads of the two families of Torrenburg and Werdenberg, both equally descended from the united House of Carlsheim and Sargans. The latter was accepted; the former was not only rejected, but even held by your mother in the most absolute detestation. On the contrary, the Count of Torrenburg (who is still alive, and whose excellent heart never harboured resentment against any human being,) not only forgave the slight, but continued on the most friendly terms with his successful rival. He succeeded in expelling from his bosom his unfortunate passion, bestowed his heart on another lady more capable of estimating its worth, and his marriage was blest with two sons, as was that of the Count of Werdenberg with two daughters. On this fortunate occurrence

ccurrence taking place, the fathers enter-d into the most solemn engagements to unite their children in marriage, and by this means blend inseparably their mutual claims upon the inheritance of each other.

"My lovely girls, you were these daughters thus betrothed while in the cradle: I cannot express to you the repugnance, with which your mother entertained the idea, that she should one day hear you call the sons of the Count of Torrenburg by the name of husband. The antipathy, which she bore that family, was increased a thousandfold by the death of her husband; on which event the great domains of your father (according to the long-established customs of the Houses, to which you owe your origin) fell to the only remaining male heirs of the Counts of Carl-

sheim

sheim and Sargans, the Count of Torrenburg and his sons. The prospect of recovering the whole of this inheritance by your union with those sons, and the generous offers made by their father for her accommodation, had no effect in softening her animosity: she felt, that it was less disagreeable to lose every thing and sacrifice both herself and you, than to depart in any degree from her obstinate resolution.

"Accordingly she quitted the Castle of Werdenberg in the greatest privacy, and concealed herself in my humble habitation. I had been long known to her, and in general had been honoured with her confidence; but she carefully hid from me the real situation of her affairs and the true motives of her conduct. She did not long survive the loss of her husband; grief

for his death and vexation at the fortune of Torrenburg rapidly de- ed her health. On her death-bed she nded from me a solemn oath, that I l adopt her orphan-daughters for my and would bring them up according instructions, which after her decease ld find conveyed in writing.

That your prudent mother should pre- our being educated in the lap of rural ence and tranquillity, rather than in mult of the great world, did not ise me in the least, and I readily the oath demanded. But when after eath I learned from her papers the e extent of my promise, and found lf enjoined to spread the report of death, and never to disclose your names, unless circumstances should give

give you a just claim to the inheritance of your ancestors, my surprise was extreme; and gladly would I have called back the oath, which your mother had carried with her into the grave, and which therefore was irrevocable.

" As the case stood, no choice was left me, and I was compelled to obey your mother's injunctions respecting your education. It greatly comforted me to find, that the secret of your real station was not confined to myself. The deceased Countess mentioned in her will, that the Bishop of Coira and the Abbot of Cloister-Curwald (both of them related to her though but distantly) were aware of her design, and had sanctioned it with their consent; and I concluded, that since her determination had found favour in the

eyes

of such learned and respectable per-
, it must needs have claims to appro-
on, which my own understanding was
short-sighted to discover.

—" It is possible," it was thus that the
untess exprest herself in her last will;
t is possible, however trifling the pro-
bility seems at present, that the family
Torrenburg may become extinct; or
t it may please Heaven to deprive it of
le heirs, as it has been pleased to de-
ve the family of Werdenberg. In that
e, let the claims of my daughters be ad-
nced, and the documents produced,
hich are deposited in the hands of the
shop of Coira, and in the archives of
dister-Curwald: for the rights of these
nsolidated families are so ordained, that
e daughters can only lay claim to the in-

heritance of their ancestors, in case no male heir should exist; a regulation, on whose justice I am too little learned to give an opinion, and whose effect I possess too little power to counteract.

"But as it is possible, that my orphan daughters may one day become the heiresses of Sargans, care must be taken to prevent their adopting any measure, which may make them blush at recollecting the obscurity, in which they are to pass their early years. I desire therefore, that you William Tell (whom I appoint their guardian) should not only bring them up innocently and virtuously, but should make them mistresses of as many elegant accomplishments, as circumstances will admit. Above all I command you on no account to suffer them to contract a marriage

riage unsuitable to their illustrious
. Unless a mother's fondness de-
s me, they will be singularly beauti-

Providence ever watches over the
an's destiny; and perhaps even in
r humble station their charms may at-
the observant glance of some young
man. Should such be the case, Wil-
Tell is at liberty to remove all obsta-
to such an union, by revealing to the
r the real name of the parents of my
ghters; and I also absolve him from
ath in so far, as to authorize him to
ose to themselves the secret of their
trious origin, whenever they are suffi-
tly arrived at years of discretion, to
e such a disclosure necessary or use-
'—

—" Here is this important paper," re-

sumed Tell after a short pause, for this long discourse had greatly exhausted him; "you will read it over together at your leisure: but one thing more I must observe to you. The Countess was no less averse to the seclusion of a convent than to ill-assorted marriages.—In one place (which I have pointed out for Mary's observation by three crosses) she writes thus —"Be the veil the last refuge of my children, and on no account must either of them be suffered to assume it before her six-and-twentieth year. Then, if no more inviting prospect presents itself, their real rank may be revealed to the Superior, and the sums (which I leave for that purpose in the hands of William Tell) appropriated to the endowment of the Convent, in which they think proper to pronounce their vows."—

—"I trust,"

"I trust," continued the old man, "that I have not abused the confidence with which your noble mother honoured me. Anxiety to leave no part of her commands unexecuted made me lose no time in hastening to the Bishop of Coira and the Abbot of Cloister-Curwald, and requesting their advice respecting your future education. I found them already fully acquainted with the intentions of the deceased Countess; I also gathered from some words which escaped them, that all the singular injunctions of that lady's will related to an old prophecy, by which the daughters of Werdenberg were threatened with the most severe mortifications and persecutions through the means of the family of Torrenburg. For my own part, I cannot say, that I lay any great stress upon these

old traditions, and even look upon belief in them as little better than rank superstition: nay, I am almost persuaded, that the very means taken to avoid the dangers with which such prophecies menace us, frequently produce their accomplishment, of which (unless I am much deceived) your own history will furnish an additional proof. The two reverend gentlemen, however, were quite of a different opinion from me on this point; in truth, they received so ill a hint of this nature which escaped me, that if I had not held my tongue in good time, I verily believe, they would have excommunicated me as an arch-heretic. Luckily, the business was not to decide, whether your mother's opinions were right, but whether her will should be obeyed; and on this head all three

three were of the same way of thinking.

"Annually I made them a visit to lay before them my proceedings, and receive instructions respecting your future conduct. At length they died, both nearly at the same time, and were succeeded by Bishop Sigisbert, and Abbot Conrad the Fourth, who also succeeded to the knowledge of your secret. The latter of those prelates (as you probably remember) once visited our cottage, as it seemed, by accident. He saw you, and felt himself greatly interested in your welfare. I have informed him of my illness, and also of the melancholy occurrences which have lately taken place, and which render these vallies no longer a safe retreat. In his answer, the good Abbot promises you his protect-

ion, proposes to remove you to those scenes where your noble ancestors once ruled, and engages (when the proper time shall be arrived) to support your claims to the utmost of his power.

" The sons of the Count of Torrenburg are dead; the Count himself is a widower, but is not quite so far advanced in years as to make his contracting a second marriage highly improbable. Still you have much to expect from his known generosity of mind, and I cannot but flatter myself, that you may look forwards to more fortunate times! Oh! with what content could I lay my head down in my grave, were I but certain that this hope will soon be realized! But alas! every thing shows itself to me, as if still at a fearful distance! Every thing seems covered with a gloomy veil

il of clouds. Many and many a bitter gh must you heave, many and many a ainful step must you tread, ere you re-in that station, whence you have been de-raded by maternal obstinacy and super-itious prejudice.—Yet take courage, my ildren; an invisible hand still guides the eps of the innocent, and you will find a owerful friend and safe adviser in the bbot of Cloister-Curwald."—

Here the old man concluded; his adopt-d daughters were silent, and wept.—All hat they had heard, all the glorious pro-pects, which were just presented before hem, were unable to overpower the me-ncholy conviction, that the hour was ar-ived, when they must close the eyes of at venerable man, who had for so many ears cherished them with all the fondness

of a father. In losing him, they foresaw too the loss of those simple pleasures, which had made their childhood glide away so gaily, and for which they feared to find the advantages of their new situation but a sorry and incomplete exchange.

Tell visibly became weaker, that is, his body became so; but his mind preserved its strength unimpaired, and to the last moment of sensibility possest its gaiety and freedom. He had indeed got the better of that illness, which at first confined him to a sick couch, but he sank under the burthen of his years. His heart at length felt the arrow of death; though in truth that metaphor is here inapplicable, for he felt no wound, he endured no pain. His existence ended in a gradual peaceful

slumber; the lamp of his life was extinguished gently and imperceptibly.

Abbot Conrad arrived before the decease of Tell, for the purpose of removing the Sisters: but they implored a short respite. Gladly would they have remained Tell's daughters all their lives; it was no light blow, that could sever the bonds, by which they were connected with the good old man; even Death was unable to effect this completely, and their affection still followed him even beyond the grave. Neither was Conrad anxious to remove them from the dying man: it was a blessed sight for him to witness the gentle departure of a just spirit, and for once to behold the so-dreaded form of Death arrayed in the peaceful appearance of a beneficent Angel. Neither was it an unin-

teresting sight, to see two girls in the bloom of youth and beauty turning away from the brilliant prospects of the world, to dwell with their whole souls on one of the most sorrowful and painful scenes, which can meet the eye of human nature; to see two highly-born princesses weep at resigning for such sounding titles the dearer-ones of daughters and sisters in the abode of rustic innocence; and to hear them at the grave of their common ancestor vow to their former play-mates, that they should ever hold their relationship as the most close and precious, though the whole universe should unite in endeavouring to efface the recollection of it from their minds.

Tell's children could not understand rightly, what their supposed sisters meant

such assurances; and the Abbot ught it unnecessary to explain to them ystery, which their approaching separa- from the young Countesses of Wer- berg would soon make sufficiently clear. The Abbot was obliged to be more com- nicative with the Domina of Engel- g. He found no great difficulty in aining her permission, that Mary (or nstantia, as she was now called, while anna resumed her baptismal name of .....Yes, Elizabeth! Ida and Constan- were their *real* names!) that Mary uld for a time make trial of a worldly , and should postpone her adoption of veil till after the unravelling of her tiny. Three conditions however were exed to the permission; first, that in her call to a religious profession should

be

be confirmed, that she should pronounce her vows in no other Convent than Engelberg; secondly, that in remembrance of her cloister-duties she should always wear the habit of the Order; lastly, that in case of the worst (by which the pious lady meant an union with an earthly bridegroom) she should not assume a worldly dress till her wedding-day, and should purchase the permission of renouncing the veil by a handsome benefaction to the Convent of Engelberg. The abbot understood the manners of the cloister, and agreed to these conditions on behalf of his wards; who in the mean while heaved many a sigh, while preparing for a journey, from which their hearts boded no good.

In the sphere in which they now moved,

every

every thing appeared strange to them, and consequently disagreeable, from their not being accustomed to such manners and appearances. The splendour of Bishop Silbert's court (at which they now resided) was too dazzling to be pleasant to eyes, which were only used to admire the simple charms of Nature; and when compared with those scenes, in which their childhood had past so happily, everything which now offered itself to their notice seemed ridiculous and frequently disgusting.

The Bishop, who felt the greater interest in the welfare of his young wards on account of their simplicity and want of relish for the dissipations of the world, was soon obliged to consent to their retiring from his court, and taking refuge

in

in the tranquillity of a Convent at Zurich. Here Constantia was perfectly at ease; but Ida, who had been always accustomed to liberty, was but half satisfied with the restraints of her abode. Nay, she would have found them insupportable, had not the recollection of Erwin Melthal followed her to the Convent, and made solitude and silence agreeable, by suffering her to indulge unrestrained the melancholy of her heart. In truth, Ida had so little of that lofty spirit, which should have been united with her lofty station, that the remembrance of the son of an humble peasant, who had perished as an undistinguished warrior, still was sacred to her affection; and often did she assure Constantia, that were he still in existence, she would rather have renounced her birth-

right

right than the hope of being one day called his wife.

—" I concealed my rank from Erwin," said she, " that his love might not take the alarm at hearing the proud title of the Countess of Werdenberg: but I will not conceal the affection which I felt, and still feel for this Erwin, this humble peasant's son, this undistinguished warrior, from any one, should any one hereafter think proper to demand my hand. No! I will avow my passion openly and firmly; and doubtless this confession will be enough to make my noble suitors abandon a girl, whose folly sets so little value on illustrious birth and titles handed down by a long line of ancestors."—

Constantia was a little embarrassed in answering these declarations. Not being

in

in love, she could not easily reconcile the union of two such names as Erwin Melthal, and Ida, Countess of Werdenberg: yet still she could not efface from her memory the solemn vows, which had passed between them; and in particular she could not but lay great stress upon their having been affianced before the altar of St. Engeltruda; a transaction, in which she had herself borne so principal a part. However the sum of her reflections was (though the goodness of her heart made her sigh, as she confest it) that it was fortunate, that Erwin's death had solved all the difficulties, which would otherwise have arisen; and she could not but fancy, that in this event she saw the hand of Providence, which had preserved from degradation the honour of the illustrious House of Werdenberg.

In

ean while the Bishop and Ab-
l were consulting, how they
advance the interests of their
urites. As they were not in-
r the prejudices, which made
ntess of Werdenberg refuse all
with the family of Torren-
s they laid no stress upon the
ioned prophecy, they soon
ake the straight road (which
ways the best) and make the
ederick of Torrenburg imme-
ainted with the existence and
of his long-forgotten relations.
was old, and without children;
not unlikely, that he would
orphans, and bring them up
re heiresses of his domains.
impression they set forward

for

for his Castle, well provided with letters and other documents to establish the veracity of their assertions.

The Abbot has been heard to say, that when the Count was first informed of the nature of their embassy, he started and turned pale; as the Bishop proceeded and made the fact certain beyond the possibility of dispute, this paleness gave place to a burning crimson, and when the tale was finished, the Count sat for a few moments lost in silent meditation; circumstances from which the friends of the two Sisters augured nothing good to their cause. The event however proved that they were mistaken in imagining, that the generous Frederick would wilfully close his eyes against a truth, because it was unpleasant to him; though what made it so unplea-

o him, they were then at a loss to
ive.

bestowed a noble heart-drawn sigh
the memory of the Countess of
denberg. He blamed her for having
red her prejudices to interfere so
h with the welfare of her daughters,
engaged to repair the injury, which
had done them. Accompanied by the
Prelates he hastened to the Convent
rich, and entreated his new-found
tions to make his abode their own.
p was the emotion exprest in his ho-
countenance, when he first saw the
ers. In them he beheld renewed in
r most brilliant colours the charms of
r mother, whom he had loved so
; and so dearly without success; and
clasped them to his bosom with tears,

which

which he vainly struggled to conceal. The girls too felt their hearts attracted towards the excellent man, and found no difficulty in considering him in every respect as their father.

They followed him to his Castle with willingness, were grateful for the kindness which he showed them, nor did it ever enter their thoughts, that it was in his power to show them more: but the Bishop was extremely surprised, that although the Count had acknowledged the validity of the documents which testified their birth, and had adopted them as his nieces, he made no mention of their being entitled to any part of his inheritance, nor seemed to have it in his contemplation to bestow them on proper bridegrooms.

—"The little eagerness," said the Abbot,

t, " which the Count shows for the
ding of his nieces confirms the report,
at he is thinking of one for himself. I
ve already heard it whispered, that he
ttached to a young person, with whom
are both well acquainted. She is love-
and virtuous; nobody can blame Count
derick's choice, though perhaps some
ople may blame him for making at his
ne of life any choice at all."—
—" I am sorry to hear this," replied
e Bishop; " should children spring from
is union, the claims of our wards will be
mpletely annihilated."—
—" In which case will they be made
happy?" said the Abbot (who thought
berally on the subject, and to whom the
dy, on whom the Count's choice was
pposed to have fallen, was even more
dear

dear than Constantia and her sist
—" Their rank is acknowledged;
sums left by their mother in our ch
are sufficient to secure them against al
lute want; their desires are moder
neither will Frederick's generosity fai
provide for them in a manner suitabl
their station. But to expect that he sh
sacrifice the point, on which he gro
the happiness of his whole future life
order that his inheritance may des
unimpaired to these unexpected i
comers, is really more than I can pos
justify to myself."—

This conversation was communicate
the Sisters: they heard it with indi
ence. They were too little acquain
with the world to think much about eve
which might affect their future intere

d were too grateful to their benefactor wish for more favours from him, than th as he could grant without injury to own feelings. But had they known *whom* their uncle's choice had fallen, y would have offered up their most vent prayers for the success of his suit; d would have looked forward to the dding-day with as much heart-felt plea- e, as to any which they had ever wit- sed; while they were still the daughters old Tell and Inhabitants of the happy le of Rutelis.

In the circle of young women, with om their near relationship to the Count Torrenburg necessarily brought them quainted, none attracted their affection strongly, as the beautiful Elizabeth of rch. The interest, which Ida felt for

this charming stranger was shortly reciprocal: yet it is probable, that Constantia would in the end have obtained the largest share of Elizabeth's friendship and confidence, on account of that winning softness of manner and gentleness of temper, which made her a much more universal favourite than her gay and thoughtless sister, had she not thought proper to retire for a while from the world not long after the commencement of her acquaintance with Elizabeth. In spite of Ida's remonstrances, Constantia entreated her uncle to suffer her to pass some time in the Convent of Zurich, and easily obtained her request.

It seems, that lovely as were the Ladies of Werdenberg, and general as was the admiration which they excited, still there

so violent a contest for the pos-
their hands, as the good Bishop
cted. It was known, that they
werless orphans; and as their un-
riage (though not publicly spoken
much circulated in whispers, this
which was likely to annihilate at
l the lofty claims of the Sisters,
heir admirers think it to the full as
it to confine their admiration for
resent to their own breasts. The
Constantia alone found in the young
of Thuringia one, who would have
her as his bride, had she been still
ughter of the peasant Tell. Con-
on her side felt, how generous was
h's conduct, and could not doubt
erity of his love: her heart in-
r to listen to him: but she could

not consent to break her religious determinations so quickly and so lightly; and she retired into the Convent, that she might at least weigh the matter maturely, and try her suitor's patience and perseverance a little by the test of time.

After her departure, the friendship of Elizabeth and Ida acquired strength daily; though their intercourse was much restricted by Count Frederick's evident dissatisfaction at it, which the unsuspecting Ida attributed to some unaccountable antipathy conceived by her uncle against her lovely friend. The fact was, that with all his excellent qualities the Count was not without his weaknesses; among the chief of which may be reckoned suspicion, bigotry, and a fondness for mystery even in the most innocent things. The last induced him

he carefully to conceal the proposals
hich (under the seal of secrecy) he had
id before Elizabeth's father: the first,
ide him fancy, that Ida had fathomed his
rpose, and from interested motives had
deavoured to set her friend against him;
id his superstitious enthusiasm led him to
lieve that the best means of obtaining
izabeth's heart and hand was to tell his
ary more frequently than ever, and be-
ow enormous donations on the Church.
e gave much; he promised more; and
ose promises were not breathed in inat-
ntive ears. The Count's domestic Priest
d the chaplain of the March family found,
at their own advantage was concerned
the accomplishment of Count Frede-
ck's wishes; and they held many a se-
et and serious conference on the means

of bringing about this union. Besides the grand inducement of avarice, Father Hilarius (so was the priest of Torrenburg named) had additional motives for action. He looked on the Damsels of Werdenberg with all that aversion, which old family-servants ever bear to new-comers; whom they generally consider as intruders, and whom they fear, lest by *their* influence their own should be diminished. But with most invincible antipathy did the Monk regard the gay and thoughtless Ida, who had sometimes indulged her mirth at his expence, and whom he was determined to expel from her uncle's heart, whatever trouble it might cost him.

Elizabeth by this time had no secrets for Ida. She informed her, that her parents had promised her hand to a powerful nobleman,

nobleman, and had ordered her in the most peremptory manner to prepare for the reception of her future husband, without even condescending to inform her of his name or situation. However, she was in truth little curious respecting him, for her heart was already bestowed upon another.

—"Yes!" said she to Ida, "I love Count Henry of Montfort, and have every reason to believe, that I am beloved in return most sincerely. Be this unknown bridegroom whom he may, he will find himself only an object of aversion in the eyes of Elizabeth of March."—

Ida, judging by her own attachment to the deceased Erwin, agreed, that to banish from the heart the image of an adored lover was quite impossible: and Elizabeth was so well pleased with her friend's mode

of reasoning, that she embraced her with redoubled affection. Ida advised her by no means to give up Count Henry; and Elizabeth on the other hand promised solemnly to follow that advice, which was so perfectly in unison with her own inclinations.

—"I am grieved to think," said Elizabeth, "that probably in future we shall be suffered to meet but seldom! I have already received some hints, that my parents suspect you of not giving me such counsels, as they could wish; and yet in the present situation of my affairs it is so necessary for me to possess some feeling heart, to whom I can apply for sympathy and advice!—However, we shall still be able to correspond privately; and those communications may be made in writing, which

the enemies of our friendship for-
to impart in conversation."—
unluckily knew nothing of the art
ting on her first arrival at the Castle
renburg; and since that time she
de but little progress under the tu-
of Father Hilarius. She blushed,
she confest this ignorance; how-
on examination Elizabeth was of
n, that her friend was already suf-
y advanced to answer all necessary
es.

I shall require no circumstantial
s from you," said she; "a single
sive word will be enough to convey
your opinion of my situation, and
me in my difficulties: a "yes" or
will in general be sufficient to de-
ıy conduct. On my side, I will

customed to yawn without inter-
on a sudden she was seized with
eatest fondness for that, which hi-
had inspired her with nothing but
she even requested, that an addi-
hour's instruction might be allowed
ery day; and as Father Hilarius
quite so simple as the girls had
ed, he concluded, that there must
secret cause for this unexpected
literature. An epistolary inter-
arising from some love-affair, na-
suggested itself to his mind, and
ermined to watch with the eyes of
gus, whether he could not make
discovery to the prejudice of his de-
pupil.

soon received a pressing invitation
it Elizabeth's the Count's permission

was requested; but as he was now on the point of declaring himself, and conceived that the presence of his lineal heiress could by no means be advantageous to his suit, that permission was refused. Elizabeth therefore had recourse to her pen, and Ida soon received the following letter.

—"I told you, that I had every reason to think that he loved me: alas! I fear, that I deceived myself. He knows my situation; knows, how I am persecuted; and yet he offers no friendly advice for my relief, nay even seems to decline every opportunity of visiting the Castle. He is at present with his uncle, who is too closely connected with my parents to favour an attachment, which would disappoint their views. Perhaps, he even insists upon Henry's giving up every

thought

ught of me!—The bridegroom of my
er's choice has not yet revealed him-
: I am still ignorant of all, except that
is rich, powerful, and *old;* but I am
ttened with his speedy arrival, and
been assured, that the day in which
presented to him, shall be that of
nuptials.—Write to me, dear Ida, and
what course I should follow: the
ger is urgent."—

he messenger, who brought this let-
waited for an answer: it was with in-
e difficulty, that Ida contrived to
wl the following words.

—" Write to your Henry: if he loves
, he will hasten to your relief."—

everal letters followed the foregoing;
ugh Ida was frequently unable to de-
her whole sentences of Elizabeth's, and

Elizabeth was sometimes completely at a loss to guess the meaning of Ida's pot-hooks. But the next letter of any consequence ran as follows—

—"Though he is the friend of my parents, my lover's uncle is not my enemy. He read the letter which I address to Henry, and permitted him to obey it. Henry has done so: Henry is here, and says that he is come to save me: but how?—Many a bold resolution presents itself to my thoughts, but all are too desperate to be adopted without advice. Decide for me, my friend; I will follow your judgment implicitly."—

To this, Ida answered—"Fly with your Henry, and take refuge in his uncle's Castle. In *your* situation, *I* would not have hesitated to follow Erwin through the world!"—

This reply was not received, till the unt of Torrenburg had been presented Elizabeth as the man, to whom her nd was destined. The repugnance, with ich she listened to his declaration, was s visible to escape his notice; but as r parents gave him the most solemn as- rances, that her heart (though not yet posed in his favour) was still free from y other attachment, he persisted in his dresses. He persuaded himself, that his iduities must in the end make him ster of her affections, if once her hand came his property; and he looked for- rd with impatience to the nuptial-day, ich was already fixed, and at no great stance.

Ida's reply arriving at this critical mo- ent, produced a rejoinder from her friend,

friend, which put her in no slight embarrassment; for the greatest part of it was totally unintelligible to her. Of Elizabeth's former letters she had frequently failed in decyphering the *words;* but in the present epistle, even where she had overcome that difficulty, the *sense* frequently appeared to her as obscure as ever.

—"Ah! my sweet friend! how precious should I esteem your last advice, could I but be certain, that in giving it you were prompted by no motive but affection for Me. You cannot be ignorant, that all mystery is now laid aside; the dreaded bridegroom is arrived; and doubtless *you* must have been made aware of his intentions, long before my parents thought proper to communicate them to myself.

elf. When therefore you counsel me
hun this marriage by flight, can I
d apprehending lest *interest*. . . . Ah!
ive me these suspicions, dear Ida! I
not doubt the sincerity of your
dship.—Yet flight is difficult, danger-
disgraceful; Henry himself is unwil-
to resort to this clandestine means of
e! On the other hand, this hated
egroom. . . . Why do they tell me of
ealth and power? What are they to
What are the domains of Carlsheim,
enburg, and Sargans, when balanced
st Henry's heart?—I know not what
!—Once more, dear Ida! but *once*
advise me! Lay aside every inte-
d motive, which might prompt your
selling me to flight; assure me, that
dship alone dictates your decision;

and

and then if you still bid me trust my fate to Henry, I will throw myself into his arms, and bid adieu to the Castle of March.... alas! perhaps for ever!"—

Again and again did Ida read this letter, and still found herself as far as ever from understanding it. She would gladly have submitted it to some more learned head than her own; but her sister was absent, and prudence forbade her communicating it to the chaplain. Above all, the line which contained the three difficult words "*Torrenburg*," "*Carlsheim*," and "*Sargans*" set all her skill at defiance; and she could not but fancy, that were she once mistress of the meaning of that one line, it would make the rest of the letter quite intelligible.—And then what harm could there be in showing a stranger that

single

single passage? The reader would certainly be able to gain but little information from it; and arguing thus, she cut the passage out of the letter, and hastened to request Father Hilarius to give her the interpretation.

Father Hilarius (whose activity was quite indefatigable, when exerted to find out what could injure his enemies, among whom he numbered the innocent Ida) already suspected the secret correspondence between his pupil and Elizabeth. The subject of it, however, was still unknown to him; but now the whole was as clear as day-light. He read what was shown to him, guest the remainder, and malicious pleasure sparkled in his eyes. To put the matter beyond a doubt, he pretended, that it was impossible to understand the

meaning

meaning of a passage so detached, and demanded a sight of the whole epistle. This, however, was refused him: upon which he declared it to be his opinion, that "the difficult words in question must be Greek; for *his* part, he could make neither head nor tail of them."—

Ida went away out of all patience! However, as she could not discover, that her friend's situation had undergone any material alteration since her last letter, she at length determined at all events to send her the same answer: accordingly the messenger was despatched with a note containing only——"Flight! instant flight."—

Ida's belief, that the bands of love once formed could never be broken (together with other romantic notions, which she had

imbibed among the Helvetian moun-
is, respecting justice and injustice, li-
ty of the heart, and suitability in mar-
e) must plead her excuse for the rash
ice, which in the simplicity of her na-
e she gave her friend; advice, which
rwards operated to her prejudice so
ngly, that it nearly ruined her reputa-
n and her whole happiness in life. She
nselled Elizabeth to take that step
ich (had she been herself the heroine of
adventure) she would herself undoubt-
y have taken: this was the utmost
ent of her error; this, and no more!
The advice was given; the advice was
owed. A few days elapsed, and she
rd, that the whole country was in an
oar. The beautiful Elizabeth of March
l eloped with Henry of Montfort; and

her

her brother Oswald, assisted by the forces of the Count of Torrenburg, had set forward in pursuit of the fugitives.

Ida was delighted to find, that her advice had been carried into execution with so much success: she only feared, lest the lovers should be overtaken by their pursuers, among whom she grieved to hear her uncle numbered; she was still ignorant, how deeply he was interested in this affair, and concluded that he was actuated to take a part in it by the friendship, which had so long subsisted between himself and the old Count of March.

Her prayers and wishes were half accomplished, half rejected. The lovers were overtaken: but Count Oswald of March was fondly attached to his sister; some well-disposed persons kindly interfered;

d; Count Frederick voluntarily re-
ed his pretensions; and it was finally
ved, that the errors of love should
rdoned, and the fugitives united in a
ic and customary manner. In truth,
one could deny, that Henry was a
h more suitable partner for the bloom-
Elizabeth, than her destined bride-
m, the age-stricken Count of Torren-
g.

da was not long without hearing from
friend: this letter, (the last which
ever received from Elizabeth,) in-
ed her to take a step, which filled up
measure of her mischances, and not
y deprived her of the favour of her de-
ved uncle, but totally ruined her in the
neral opinion.

—" Ida! dear Ida! authoress of all my

present

present happiness! How wise was your advice! How perfectly has it succeeded! Yet a few days, and I shall become the wife of Henry. Still I shall feel my pleasure incomplete, unless I can thank you for it with an embrace on my bridal-day. Come then, my friend! come to place the garland on my brow*, and rejoice in the work of your prudence! You will find your sister with me: it was easy for her to obtain a dispensation from her Abbess. I rejoice, that your uncle is now in a distant part of the country, as in the present moment you would certainly have been

* This alludes to a custom still preserved in many parts of Germany: the bride wears a myrtle-wreath during the nuptial-ceremony, and it is usual for her on the day after her marriage to present this wreath to that female friend, to whom she is most attached.

refused

ased permission to come to me. As it resolve to brave the hazard of a few ms at his return; he will soon forget r displeasure at your witnessing my ials, being totally ignorant of every ng which might seriously make him of- ded with you, and which (you may be ured) shall never come to his know- lge.—But though concealed from all hers, the friendly part which you have ted in this business, shall never be for- tten by the grateful heart of your Eli- beth.

" Then haste to me, my friend! I m with impatience to make my Henry own to you: he too is impatient to see e friend of his Betrothed, the kind ad- er, to whom the Happy-ones owe their ppiness. I have resolved, that this

wished-for introduction shall take place at the altar, before which I am to pronounce the nuptial vow. I confess, this decision is in some degree dictated by selfish motives: were Henry to see the lovely Ida of Werdenberg, before it is too late for him to retract with honour, who knows but her charms might make him faithless to the less fair Elizabeth?—Ah! dearest Ida, you are conscious, that I do but jest; I know well the heart of my friend, and the honour of my lover! Forgive then the fantastic humours of a girl already half wild with her happiness, and refuse not to make by your presence that happiness still greater."—

A great part of this letter was as little understood by Ida as the former one; however, she took good care not to employ the Chaplain to explain the meaning.

doubted not his opposing her depart-
for the Castle of March, since her
(though for what reason she could
magine) would disapprove of her vi-
nd in the Count's absence she was
y under the direction of Father Hi-
s. Ida therefore contented herself
understanding from the letter, that
as invited to a wedding, at which
successful counsels which she had
(together with other friendly ser-
which she had rendered the happy
would make *her* an important per-
e; at which she should meet her
Constantia, and doubtless many
of her youthful friends; and where
ould exhibit her beauty to the best
tage, and should dress, dance, sing,
ugh, as she had frequently done on

similar occasions on the blooming lawn of Rutelis. This was enough for her to know, and to determine her proceedings. On the appointed day Elizabeth sent a small body of attendants to wait for her friend in a wood at no great distance from the Castle of Torrenburg. Ida failed not to join them there; and without bidding adieu to Father Hilarius, she very quietly set forward for the Castle of March.

She reached it in safety, and soon found herself clasped in the arms of her delighted friend. There too she had the happiness of once more embracing Constant. The two Sisters past the intervening time between their arrival and the wedding day with Elizabeth in her apartment, where (according to the custom of other times) on such occasions no man was per-

ted to show himself, not even the
degroom.

The important day arrived. Followed
her lovely companions, herself the
st lovely, Elizabeth with trembling
ps and a fluttering heart approached
altar, where Henry of Montfort waited
arrival. Ida now stepped forward;
threw back her veil, and prepared to
ten the wreath of Innocence among the
den ringlets of her friend: a similar
land hung on her arm, with which she
s afterwards to present the bridegroom.
cupied entirely with the task of deco-
ing Elizabeth, she had not yet cast her
es on young Montfort; she had not
served, that he started on beholding her;
e had not heard the name of "*Rosanna*,"
hich escaped from his trembling lips. She

now

now turned to him for the purpose of offering him the other wreath; she already extended her hand; when fixing her eyes on his countenance, she uttered a cry expressive at once of the utmost surprise and terror, attempted but in vain to pronounce the name of Erwin Melthal, and would have sank upon the ground, had not Constantia rushed forward and received her in her supporting arms.

Constantia still wore the habit of a Nun; the altar was adorned exactly in the same manner, and the blazing lamps shed the same mysterious light along the fretted roofs and gloomy arches, as on that day when Erwin and Rosanna knelt at the shrine of St. Engeltruda, poured forth the most solemn vows of eternal fidelity, and heard Constantia devote the breaker

of

those vows to unceasing shame and rrow.—Erwin Melthal (or rather Henry Montfort, for alas! they formed but ae) had long believed the lovely Sisters be no more the inhabitants of earth: onstantia on the other hand was in the ame error respecting Erwin. The sudlen appearance of one, whom she had long ince numbered with the dead, imprest ipon her countenance something of that erious, that strangely awful expression, vhich struck him so forcibly, when she nited his hand with Rosanna's in the hapel of Engelberg. He recollected her vords—" Should either of you rend sunder the bonds, with which I now unite our fates for ever, that instant shall my orm (be I living, or be I dead) stand bere you threatening and awful, to reproach

proach you with your crimes."—These recollections, and the unexpected appearance of the Sisters, at the very moment when he was on the point of giving his hand to another, made him consider the whole scene as a supernatural vision! He believed, that the forms which stood before him, were creatures of another world; his brain was unable to support the shock; the surrounding objects floated before his eyes, his senses forsook him, and he sank without animation at the feet of his astonished bride.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

PRINTED BY D. N. SHURY, BERWICK STREET, SOHO.

FEUDAL TYRANTS;

OR,

The Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans.

A ROMANCE.

TAKEN FROM THE GERMAN.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY M. G. LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF

The Bravo of Venice, Adelgitha, Rugantino, &c.

VOL. IV.

THIRD EDITION.

The portals sound, and pacing forth
With stately steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of regal birth,
And mitred fathers in long order go. GRAY.

London:

Printed by D. N. SHURY, Berwick Street, Soho,

FOR J. F. HUGHES, WIGMORE STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1807.

EUDAL TYRANTS,

&c. &c. &c.

PART THE SEVENTH.

CONTINUATION OF

"HE SISTERS WITHOUT A NAME."

Vritten by the Abbot of Cloister-Curwald.

OH! noble Elizabeth! you to om these leaves are more particu- y addrest, have you had resolution icient to read thus far? will possess sufficient presence of mind enable you to continue the pe-

rusal of this writing, now that I have placed before you the most important and most cruel transactions, which have occurred throughout your whole life, and by which your whole life has been embittered? and will you, when at length you reach the conclusion of my painful narrative, magnanimously sacrifice your long-cherished prejudices; and daring to gaze steadily on the light of truth, will you learn to excuse and to pity, to regret and to forgive?

Before I relate the transactions, which followed the fatal interview between Ida and her lover on your bridal day, I must request your patient attention, while I relate those incidents of Henry of Montfort's earlier days, which I believe to be still unknown to you. It is thus only, that I can enable

work should be completed, and till
bones of Mary and Rosanna Tell
r such he still thought them) were
moved to the honourable burial-place
ovided for them by his affection.
hile the tomb was erecting, nothing
uld persuade him to quit the holy
ace even for a day; and the whole
ighbourhood was lost in astonishment
the homage, which the Count of
ontfort thought it necessary to pay
the relics of Tell's daughters.

Nothing was able to rouse him from
at dangerous melancholy, to which
abandoned himself without reserve,
l the emperor's commands necessitated
s attendance. He arrived at Grans,
d found, that while he had been
ving up everything for the indulgence

of

of unavailing sorrow, his exalted protector had not been equally unmindful of his favourite's worldly interests. The old Count of Montfort had been summoned to the imperial court; where he was made so fully aware of the favourable posture of Henry's affairs, and was so thoroughly convinced, that to deny the authenticity of his claims would be fruitless, that his nephew no sooner made his appearance, than he came towards him with open arms, and embraced him as his relation and his presumptive heir. He was then preparing to offer some excuse for past transactions, which in their very nature were totally inexcuseable; but the young Count interrupted his apologies, freely forgave him, and in presence of the emperor assured his uncle,

uncle, that he might depend upon his burying his wrongs in silence and oblivion.

Still, when the arrangements respecting Henry's succession to the Lordship of Montfort came under consideration, Count Egbert earnestly insisted, that two or three clauses should be introduced, in order that the future heirs of his body might not be left entirely destitute. Henry could not conceal a smile, while he acceded to this proposal, and the rest of the company indulged themselves without scruple in a loud burst of laughter; for the old man was still unprovided with either wife or children, though there was scarcely to be found in all Germany a lady of beauty, birth, and fortune, whom he had not honoured with the offer of his hand and heart.

On the other hand, Henry, whose age would have suited much better with such proposals, seemed not to bestow a thought upon the subject: amidst the throng of lovely women who graced the court, his heart remained cold as the marble, which covered the imagined ashes of his loved and lamented Rosanna. But the emperor was not equally indifferent, respecting his young friend's contracting some honourable engagement.

—"Montfort," said he, "I flatter myself, that I have omitted no means of substantiating your claims, which lay in my imperial power: but fraud and avarice will frequently suggest such ingenious expedients for eluding the execution of justice, that (should I die before your uncle) you might still find

it no easy task to obtain possession of your inheritance. While therefore I am still in existence and able to serve you, unite yourself by marriage with some powerful family, whose connection may support your claims, when death shall have deprived you of my favour and protection.—Your enemies then will not dare to dispute your rights. Tell me, Henry; is the indifference, with which you seem to look on the beauties of my court, real or affected? —If your heart has not as yet made its choice, suffer me to mention to you the bride of *my* selection."—

Henry's reply assured him with great truth, that there existed not a woman, who possest any interest in his affections.

—"Well then!" resumed the em-

peror, " take my advice, and offer your hand to the beautiful Elizabeth of March, the jewel of all our German maidens: in her you will find united youth, charms, spirit, sense, piety, and virtue; besides a thousand other excellent qualities, which are seldom to be met with but in men. Her family too is sufficiently powerful to secure you against the attacks of malignity and violence, to which you will probably be exposed after my death; an event, which increasing infirmities make me believe to be at no great distance."—

Henry had frequently seen and admired the noble Elizabeth. In truth, it was considered among the young courtiers almost as a total want of taste, and as a proof of a cold insensible heart, to see Elizabeth and feel nothing warmer

than

than admiration. Henry (who could make no reasonable objection to the match proposed, and who was unwilling to confess the fruitless passion, which devoured his heart, for one who had long since rested in the grave) could only assert the improbability of his obtaining Elizabeth's hand in preference to many suitors so much more distinguished than himself; especially as it was reported, that her hand was already destined to the youthful Richard of Ulmenhorst, her father's ward and near relation.

—" Tell not me," interrupted the emperor, " of those reports, and of your own consciousness of your demerits. Go to the Castle of March; become acquainted with Elizabeth's virtues, as well as with her charms. I am

certain, that you will love her; I flatter myself, that *she* too will love *you;* and what pleasure would it give me, dear Henry, could I see your hands united, before I close my eyes in this world for ever!"—

An interest so warm, and expressions so condescending in the mouth of a sovereign, could not but produce the desired effect. Montfort obeyed, and visited the Castle of March. He beheld Elizabeth; he investigated her character; she inspired him with esteem, with admiration..... but not with love.— yet it was soon evident.. (will the Countess of Torrenburg ever pardon my assertion?) that Elizabeth had not seen Henry with the same indifference. He felt, that he was preferred; he could not but confess, that the possession of such an angel must be an inestimable treasure;

and though the remembrance of Rosanna rendered his heart incapable of any warmer sentiment than friendship, still since that beloved one was lost to him for ever, he resolved not to let his folly throw away the blessing, which offered itself to his acceptance. He determined to fulfill the emperor's injunctions, and to offer his hand to the only woman, who was worthy to fill Ida's place in his heart. But he hesitated so long, and took so much time before he made his declaration, that Elizabeth's parents had already promised her in the most solemn and positive manner to the rich and powerful Count of Torrenburg. In consequence, Montfort was given to understand (though with every possible mark of esteem) that his absence from the Castle of

March would be acceptable to
owner.

Grieved and vexed at his having
long delayed to explain himself, Hen
departed; the heart of Elizabeth acco
panied him. Count Egbert had nev
seemed very anxious for his nephew
marriage, nor had given himself a
trouble, in order to forward his vie
upon Elizabeth: the fact was, that
spite of the ill success of his former n
trimonial speculations, he was at that n
ment totally engrossed by a new schei
of the same nature; and the perso
to whom his views were now directe
was no other than.... the Lady Ida
Werdenberg. He was not only e
chanted by her personal charms, but
also took it into his consideration, th
after the Count of Torrenburg's dea

the would possess very plausible claims upon the valuable domains of Carlsheim and Sargans; claims, which (as the possibility of his own death was an idea, which never by any accident was suffered to enter into his calculations) this silly old man proposed to inforce in their fullest extent.

He had already given the Count of Torrenburg some hints of the honour, which he had it in contemplation to confer upon his family. The Count in return gave him to understand, that if his niece had no objection to the match, he should not oppose it: and as the old dotard thought himself irresistible in spite of former disappointments (which might have taught him better) he was on the very point of surprizing Ida with the agreeable intelligence, that

she had made a conquest of his heart. It was at this juncture, that the news reached him of his destined uncle's being on the brink of marriage with the Lady Elizabeth of March.

Nothing could be more contrary to his plans, than this intelligence; Count Frederick of Torrenburg might have children, and then there would be an end of all his claims in right of his bride, whom he loved not merely as the beautiful Ida of Werdenberg, but as the future co-heiress of Carlsheim and Sargans. Now then he had nothing more at heart, than to break off this inconvenient marriage. To accomplish this, no better means suggested itself, than to persuade his nephew to a renewal of his addresses to the intended bride; and since her hand was no

longer

longer to be obtained by the ordinary methods of solicitation, he resolved to have recourse to a little innocent artifice, which (he doubted not) would soon bring the young people to a proper understanding. Aware, that Henry was not likely to enforce his suit with as much eagerness as the nature of the case required, the uncle in his zeal for his nephew's advantage, or rather for the success of his own interested views, resolved to examine himself into the state of Elizabeth's inclinations, and to place Henry's attachment to her in the most favourable light. He found the unhappy girl in tears; the day was already fixed, on which her hand was to be united with that of the dreaded Count of Torrenburg. It was no difficult task to make

her confess her disinclination to her antient bridegroom, and her preference for the blooming Montfort, on whom her heart had long fixed its affections irrevocably. She also listened without any *very* marked signs of repugnance to the proposal of an elopement. Her heart and her reason both assured her, that to avoid the union which she so much detested, flight was the only resource left her: her friend Ida had advised her adopting it without delay; and now the same proposal was made to her from a quarter the most unexpected. Elizabeth was at length persuaded by the pressing entreaties of Count Egbert to summon to her aid the youth, who (as she was assured by his uncle) burned for her with the most ardent affection, and to whom

her union with his rival would undoubtedly give a mortal wound.

She wrote to Henry, and declared herself ready to throw herself upon his protection. This important step was taken by Elizabeth through anxiety and affection, approved of by Ida out of friendship and ignorance of the world, and advised by the old hypocrite Count Egbert for the sake of his own private interest. As to Henry himself, he was perfectly ignorant of all that was going forward, till he received Elizabeth's letter: but what man with the feelings of humanity alive in his bosom would have disobeyed the voice of an angel like Elizabeth, pleading for aid, and confessing her attachment? compassion, esteem, admiration, and gratitude, all united to produce a sentiment in his

heart.

heart which, if not love, was at least very like it: a sentiment, which doubtless would soon have been love itself, had not unfortunately.... Oh! lady, you for whom I trace these lines, and for whose decision (when my task is done) I shall wait with such anxiety, this is a chasm, which I leave to be filled up by *you!*

Elizabeth disappeared—the lovers were overtaken—the Count of Torrenburg, when the circumstances were all made known to him, resigned his pretensions with a good grace. The entreaties of Elizabeth's brother, and some little apprehension lest her reputation should suffer injury by this elopement, induced her parents to withdraw their opposition to her union with young Montfort. The marriage-day arrived:

Ida flew to congratulate her friend; and instead of the enamoured bridegroom and the happy bride, she beheld Erwin Melthal stretched pale and senseless at the feet of the alarmed and astonished Elizabeth. As Elizabeth saw Henry's colour change, she sprang towards him, and clasped his hand. Hastily he drew it back with a look of horror, sank on the ground, and closed his eyes as if to eternal slumber.

She now turned to Ida, who (supported by her sister) appeared more dead than living: she demanded the meaning of this extraordinary scene. Terror and astonishment sealed up the lips of Ida; and Constantia also was silent through doubt, whether an explanation just then would be adviseable.

—"A strange instance of love at first

sight!" whispered to her next neighbour, a virgin aunt of Elizabeth's aged forty-seven.

—"And mutual too, as it seems!" replied the plump dowager, to whom this audible whisper had been addrest.

Ha! at those words how high swelled the proud bosom of Elizabeth! How fiery was the glance like lightning, which she threw upon Ida, as she turned away! How contemptuous was the look, with which she eyed young Montfort, in whom the care of his servants had just produced some faint signs of returning animation. Her impetuous spirit had always rendered her too susceptible of sudden and violent passion, and (to confess the truth) had already betrayed her into the commission of many a hasty and ill-judged action. Without waiting

for

for further explanation she rushed out of the chapel, while her eyes flashed fire as she went. She was followed by all those, who envied the sisters; and who were now resolved to devote a day, long destined to happiness, to the nourishment of suspicion and resentment; and who were prepared to use their utmost arts to render the wounds lately given to love and friendship incurable.

I will not attempt to describe the state of Ida's mind. Constantia (who, though not more able to unravel the mystery of these unexpected occurrences, was yet more collected than her sister) judged it prudent for them to withdraw as soon as possible from the curious gaze of the by-standers. Accordingly, she conducted the bewildered Ida to her apartment, and then hastened

to that of the bride, in order that she might at once offer explanations and receive them in return. She had not yet sufficiently recovered from her first astonishment to conceive, how strong an impression to her sister's prejudice the scene, which had just taken place, must have made upon Elizabeth: much less did she suppose it possible, that her friend could act so unjustly as to show resentment against herself for an action, which (even if wrong) had at any rate been committed by another.

Her surprise therefore was great, when she was refused admittance to Elizabeth, with every mark of harshness and indignation.—She returned sorrowing from her fruitless embassy; and she had scarcely regained her own apartment, before a Chamberlain made his

appear-

appearance there to inform the sisters in the name of the Lord of the Castle, that in consequence of Elizabeth's sudden indisposition, and of the late confusion (the cause of which was too well known to them to make any explanation on that head necessary) it would be advisable for them immediately to quit a house, in which certainly no bridal ceremony would be celebrated at present.

In the mean while, Henry on opening his eyes cast his first glances eagerly towards the spot, where he fancied, that the spirits of Tell's grand-daughters had appeared to him; they were no longer to be seen. He was now confirmed in his visionary notions, and implicitly believed, that he had really seen an apparition.—He inquired for Elizabeth: the answer was, that she had quitted

the chapel evidently in displeasure; very little reflection was necessary to make him aware, that the singular part which he had just been playing, made it necessary for him to hasten to his bride without delay, and explain the cause of his mysterious behaviour. While approaching her chamber, he considered with himself, whether it would, or would not, be adviseable to inform her of the vision, which had just appeared to him, and to lay open to her the secret history of his early life! His deliberations, however, were quite superfluous; for he was denied admittance to Elizabeth with no less positiveness and contempt, than had been shown on Constantia's application.

He felt, that Elizabeth had some reason to think herself insulted; and in-

stead of repaying her scorn with scorn, he lost no time in justifying himself in the eyes of his offended mistress.—A personal interview was denied him; the explanation therefore could only be conveyed in writing; but Henry was not sufficiently an adept in penmanship to permit his finishing so long an apology with as much expedition, as the nature of the case made desirable. He resolved therefore to employ a secretary; and as upon inquiry no ready writer was to be found in the whole Castle except the family Chaplain (whom I have already mentioned as the secret ally of Father Hilarius, and as being entirely in the Count of Torrenburg's interests) he requested his assistance. He might have chosen from among a thousand,

thousand, and yet could not have confided his affairs to a more improper instrument. However, Henry dictated, and the Friar wrote as follows.

Henry to Elizabeth.

are offended, my beloved!—
en to myself it scarcely appears
, that when I stood with you
he altar, I should have withdrawn
d from yours; that I should
itated to pronounce the words,
would have made you mine for
hat when you looked upon me
es of love, I could have looked
other than on *you*.—No; this
ould have happened by natural
; the enemies of our love must
mployed infernal arts to delude
ses and interrupt my happiness!
it past this evening in the Chapel
ertainly have been produced by
magic;

magic; no otherwise can I account for it!

Elizabeth, my heart was once another's: my heart would *still* have been another's, had not death torn her from me. But my Rosanna has long been an angel in Heaven; the truth which I swore to her, and which (while she had life) I never would have violated, could not surely extend beyond the precincts of the grave. Surely that happy-one, to whom now all things must be known, must also know, in what degree I once loved *her*, and in what degree I now love Elizabeth: Surely, she cannot envy you, my beloved, the hand of your poor Henry; surely, she would not forsake her own mansions of peace and bliss, to forbid our union and destroy our hopes of happiness?

And yet, Elizabeth.....! Mark, my beloved, and conceive my astonishment, my horror!—And yet, Elizabeth, I swear to you most solemnly, that this evening as you stood at the altar, I saw the form of the long-deceased Rosanna Tell approach, and place the myrtle wreath upon your forehead; while by her side stood a second apparition in a religious habit, the exact resemblance of Mary, Rosanna's sister, who is buried with her in the same tomb!

But strange as this circumstance appears, let it not disturb your tranquillity, my Elizabeth, nor prevent an union, on which I depend for all the happiness of my future life. If the spirit of Rosanna *really* appeared, she came not to destroy the bliss of the man who adored her, but to give her celestial sanction:

but for my own part, I am persuaded, that this appearance was some illusion, some contrivance of those who envy us, some magical appearance produced by monastic arts in the night and secrecy of the Cloister.———

Beloved Elizabeth, admit me to your presence, and every point shall be explained most fully. At present I must break off, for the person (whose pen I employ to trace these lines) has taken offence at an expression which accidentally escaped me, and refuses any longer to render me his services.

In truth, Henry's ecclesiastical secretary was greatly displeased at the words "monastic arts:" however, an apology and some pieces of gold not only brought the avaricious Monk into good-humour again, but even induced him to offer to be the bearer of his letter, in case the young Lord of Montfort should still think proper to send it, after hearing what he (the Monk) had to say upon the subject.

Henry gave him permission to speak, and promised to be attentive.

—"You believe then," began Father Jacob, "that the form, whose appearance so greatly surprized you in the Chapel belonged to a deceased person?

—Count of Montfort, it was the living Rosanna, Tell whom you beheld; Rosanna, who has now exchanged that name for the more lofty one of Ida of Werdenberg—You start?—You believe what I tell you to be impossible?—Nay, Count, with all my heart! Number *me* (if you like it) among those, who wish to impede you in the gratification of your new amours: it would be ill-breeding in me to force upon you the conviction of a truth, to which you are evidently so unwilling to give credit!"—

The crafty Friar rose, as if about to quit the apartment: It is superfluous to say, that Henry (whose head was now assailed by astonishment from a new quarter) did not suffer him to depart.—Father Jacob possest the whole of Ida's history, except in so far as related to her

ad

adventure with Erwin Melthal: he refused to communicate any portion of his knowledge, till this hitherto unsuspected circumstance had been fully explained to him. This demand was complied with, every circumstance was confided to him; and with astonishing quickness he discerned in this narrative the means of attaining an object, which he and his honest ally, the keeper of Count Frederick's conscience, had very nearly at heart, but which they had found themselves compelled to abandon in despair.

Montfort had finished. And now the Monk exerted all his eloquence to convince his auditor of that, which Henry's heart was already most anxious to believe; namely, that his first oaths of love ought to be the most binding; that *it was no less* necessary to keep his *faith to Ida of* Werdenberg than to Ro-

sanna Tell; and that his giving that hand to Elizabeth, which he had sworn to give to another, would only serve to form an union unjust, sinful, abominable, and accursed.

Henry was quite of the Monk's opinion, long before his oration came to an end. Of much more consequence did it now appear to him to renew his vows to the long-lost late-found Ida, than to appease the indignation of the offended Elizabeth. Joy and anxiety almost bereft him of understanding. The Monk was commissioned to procure for him an immediate interview with Ida; and when Father Jacob returned to him with the information, that an hour had already elapsed, since the Damsels of Werdenberg departed from the Castle, he forgot (in his impatience to rejoin

his

mistress) so completely all ideas of priety, of consideration for the feel- of his bride, and of the miscon- uctions to which he was making his nduct liable, that without farther beration he sprang upon his courser, pursued the way, which the Monk nted out to him as that, by which he ght the most speedily overtake the ters. In the hurry of his enthusiastic ction, he forgot every thing else; left no apology for the Count of rch; no explanation for Elizabeth; even neglected to remind the Monk deliver his letter, or to desire him to ar up the mystery of his conduct.

In fact, Father Jacob had other busi- ss upon his hands, than to extenuate ontfort's offence in the eyes of Eliza-

beth. Immediately on the youth's departure, he lost no time in transmitting the following letter to the family-priest of Torrenburg.

Father Jacob to Father Hilarius.

BEFORE this letter can reach you, doubtless the occurrences of this evening will be already known to you: but learn from me some circumstances, which are as yet a secret to all but myself and the principal actors in them. —Erwin Melthal, that peasant youth on whose perfections and on whose attachment you have heard Ida dwell with such enthusiasm, proves to be no other than Henry of Montfort.—Elizabeth is still ignorant of this previous acquaintance, and must remain so: with the sisters she is likely to have no immediate intercourse, and by my management

Henry has left the Castle of March in pursuit of Ida; though to gain time, I thought it prudent to give him a false direction, and he is now upon the road to the half-ruined Fortress, which the Count of Torrenburg possesses in Thuringia.

Let your patron lose no time in hastening hither—I will take care, that he shall find the family disposed to consider his renewed proposals as a most honourable and fortunate event; and I doubt not, in the first tumult of her passions, of disappointed love, violated friendship, and raging jealousy, Elizabeth may be easily persuaded to an union, which will make her mistress of that rival's fate, to whose pernicious beauty she ascribes the loss of her own promised happiness.

Be assured, it will be greatly both for our advantage and for mine, that Elizabeth should become Count Frederik's wife. He is advanced in years; it is highly improbable, that he should have children; and a rich bequest is already secured to our convent in the event of his dying without legitimate descendants. On the other hand, should he remain unmarried, there is every probability of his acknowledging the Damsels of Werdenberg as his heiresses; a step, which would ruin all our hopes for ever, but which (you may depend upon it) he will never be suffered to take, if the jealous and incensed Elizabeth becomes Countess of Torrenburg.

With regard to these hated girls, whose intrusion is so greatly adverse to

our interests, no means must be neglected for expelling them from their guardian's house and favour. As to Constantia, I look upon her as little dangerous, being (to judge by every appearance) entirely devoted to a religious life: it would therefore be unnecessary to molest her, were not her fate so closely connected with her sister's, that it is impossible to separate the one from the other. But it is against Ida that all your skill must be directed.—Doubtless, Elizabeth's letters are still in her possession—Seize them, either by art or violence, it matters not which: they must necessarily contain matter sufficient to convince Count Frederick, that it was by her advice, that her friend was persuaded to elope from him with young Montfort: he

look upon her as the traverser of views upon Elizabeth, and that will sufficient to banish her from his ur—this will be greatly confirmed the appearance of the sisters at Eliza-'s wedding, which he cannot but sider as highly disrespectful to him- and his feelings; but you must efully conceal from him, that Ida con- ed in the solitude of Torrenburg tle, and Constantia buried in the nce of her Convent, were both igno- nt of the rejected lover's name till ter their arrival at the Castle of arch. The Count is noble-minded; t he is proud, irascible, easily induced believe the worst of those who sur- und him, and obstinate in retaining ejudices once received—these are the

parts

parts of his character, upon which it must be your care to work, till you have kindled a flame against Ida in his bosom, which all her tears will be unable to extinguish. On the other hand, you must assail Ida with terrors of her uncle's indignation, and with threats of an immediate union with her superanuated admirer, Count Egbert: and when you have terrified her sufficiently to prevent her conduct from being regulated by her understanding, assure her, that there is no way of avoiding Count Frederick's wrath and old Montfort's marriage-bed, except flight from the Castle of Torrenburg.—That step once taken, Ida is ruined; Constantia may easily be convicted of participation in her sister's actions; the ungrateful girls will be banished

nished from their uncle's favour irre-
cably, and then the game will be all
ur own.——Farewell, and let me hear
om you with all diligence.

THE unconscious subject of these abominable artifices was in the mean while journeying homewards with a heavy heart, doubly afflicted by the injustice of her friend, and the supposed perfidy of her lover. She had ascertained no more before her departure from the Castle of March, than that the man, whom she had so long believed to be a peasant's son, was Count Henry of Montfort; but it still remained unexplained, how Henry could have so totally forgotten his former vows, and have offered his hand to another. The more that she reflected, the less reason did there appear to doubt, that upon discovering his own noble origin he had aban-

[b]ndoned all thoughts of an union [w]th the low-born daughter of William [T]ell. In the opinion of love this fault [w]as not to be excused; she in some [d]egree obtained a forced tranquillity by [r]olving, that his conduct had rendered [h]im totally unworthy of her; and that [n]ever should the inconstant Henry return [t]o her chains, it would be beneath Ida of [G]erdenberg to accept that hand, which [h]e had insolently withdrawn from the [h]umble Rosanna Tell.

Constantia accompanied her sister for [s]ome part of her journey, but was at [l]ength unwillingly compelled to separate [f]rom her and return to her convent, [a]ttended by the vassals, whom the Ab[b]ess of Zurich had sent for her protec[t]ion. Ida reached her guardian's Castle without meeting any adventure; but a

mistake

mistake of her attendants occasioned her to go considerably out of her road, and this delay gave time for Father Jacob's letter to precede her at the Castle of Torrenburg, Father Hilarius lost no time in searching for Elizabeth's letters; he found them, and found them also such, as he wished. Some, which would have exculpated Ida, and made against Elizabeth, he committed to the flames, and then lost no time in communicating the rest to his patron.

Count Frederick had returned home on Elizabeth's bridal-day, which he intended to pass with his niece in silent melancholy. He had resolved to inquire into her character with more attention, than he had done hitherto; and as his late disappointment had made him give up all thoughts of marriage for himself,

s his intention to declare that the
els of Werdenberg were his future
sses, in case they should prove to
ve so great a distinction.
his arrival he inquired for Ida;
s informed, that she was gone to
wedding of the young Countess
arch.—He started in astonishment,
father Hilarius shook his head with
ile. Frederick enquired, how the
could have ventured to take a
, which he could not but look upon
marked token of disrespect? or if
were ignorant of his having payed
addresses to Elizabeth, why had
father Hilarius prevented her from
onsciously offering him this public
ont? the worthy Chaplain shrugged
shoulders, and answered that—
ood-lack! he was too old and too

simple

simple to look after a young wanton girl with the devil (heaven bless us!) in her head."—

—" She slipped away," continued he, " without saying a word of her intention to me, or to any one—and as to her *ignorance* of your adresses..... Blessed St. Barnabas! she knew much more about them, than I did myself!— Why, my lord, I have just discovered, that she has long kept up a secret correspondence with the Lady Elizabeth; and I can bring you the most undeniable proofs, that you would at this moment have been happy in the possession of your bride, had it not been for Ida, for the self-created heiress of Torrenburg; who instigated her innocent friend to refuse your hand; who fooled her into an imaginary passion for young

fort; and when she had entangled poor Elizabeth too closely in this gue to admit of her retreating with ur, who finally persuaded her to the disgraceful measure of an ment.—Yet to say truth, there is excuse for Ida's conduct, since could not but heartily wish to pre- a marriage so extremely detri- to her own views and inter-

rederick heard every word with easing amazement. In a voice of y he demanded, that the proofs, of ich the Monk had spoken, should be tantly produced.—Father Hilarius n gave Elazabeth's letters into his d, accompanying them with some lections on the danger of teaching men the art of writing; at the same

time

time reminding the Count, how strenuously and how frequently he had represented to him, that in the hands of so forward a girl as Ida, there could not possibly be a more dangerous instrument than a pen; and that to leave her to the full as ignorant as he found her, was an object most desirable both for the Count and for herself.—But his remonstrances had been disregarded; Ida was taught to write; and now see the blessed effects of it!

Elizabeth's hand was not to be mistaken; and while the Count gazed upon the writing so well known to him, the malicious Priest inflamed his resentment still further by relating various passages of Ida's early life, to which he well knew how to give that colouring, which suited best with his designs;

he related, how during the time that she was believed to be Tell's granddaughter, Ida had greatly shocked her companions by her free and dissolute manners; he proceeded to state, that in consequence her guardians had been obliged to separate her from Constantia, lest the one should be perverted by the bad example of the other; that regret at finding all his efforts to reclaim her in vain, had broken the heart of her adopted father, and sent him with sorrow to his grave: that she had carried on an intrigue with a man of low birth, to whom she was still attached; and that in all probability it was her intention to enrich this peasant with the valuable inheritance, which she expected to derive from Count Frederick's bounty.

—" And then" continued Father Hilarius, casting a malicious side-glance upon Ida's claims; " and then how easy will it be for the young fellow to vamp up some fine story of an unexpected discovery, and of a relationship to some illustrious family long concealed, and thus qualify himself for assuming openly the proud name of *Count of Torrenburg*, in right of his wife, her generous uncle's heiress!"—

The Count bit his lip: yet after a long silence he answered, that Ida's parentage and claims admitted of no doubt; and that he wished most heartily, that she were any other person, in order that in pronouncing his judgement upon her conduct, she might have been entitled to less consideration and respect.

—" But

—"But in spite of all her faults," said e, "I cannot deal harshly with a per-on, who is the daughter of my deceased riend, and of the woman whom I once dored. Yet on the other hand, such pean artifices, such acts of interested aseness, of such flagrant ingratitude, ught not to escape without due punish-nent.—Ida has destroyed the happiness, vhich I promised myself in marriage; t will be no more than a just vengeance, f I destroy hers in return.—Should he fail to exculpate herself, she shall ither be immured for life within the valls of a Cloister, or give her hand vithout delay to the old Count of Montfort, from whom I this morning eceived proposals for her hand."—

When he pronounced this sentence, he Count was standing in an open

balcony: as the last words fell from his lips, he saw Ida with her attendants riding slowly towards the Castle. He hastily drew back; and feeling, that he was at that time too much incensed to give her cause an impartial hearing, he ordered Father Hilarius to fill his place —the Friar exulted at this command: he knew well the generosity of his patron's nature, and dreaded that irresistible conviction, which ever accompanies the pleading of injured innocence: he therefore heard with great satisfaction, that the cause was not to be tried by a judge, the goodness of whose own heart would naturally incline him to the side of mercy, justice, and compassion.

Ida had scarcely divested herself of her bridal robes, when a procession

entered her chamber composed of the chief officers of the Count's household, and headed by the reverend Father Hilarius. The formal manner of their entrance, and the gravity which reigned in every countenance, were alone sufficient to communicate to her mind some degree of confusion and alarm.—How greatly were these emotions increased, when the Chaplain began his examination, which was preceded by a terrible description of her guardian's anger, and which consisted of questions so artfully worded, that taken by surprize and bewildered as she was, she found herself constrained either to return no answers at all, or such as were apparently to her disadvantage.—Sensible of this at length, she entreated, that time *might* be allowed her for

recollection: the greatest part of her auditors were well inclined to the poor suppliant, and felt for her the most sincere compassion. The Monk therefore did not dare to act towards her with all the harshness, to which his heart prompted him; the further examination of this affair was postponed to three hours after sunrise of the next day, and Ida was left alone.

It was midnight.—Ida sat weeping, while a variety of unpleasant images crouded before her imagination, and retraced the many singular and painful transactions, of which that day had been a witness. Interesting as had been the events which took place at the Castle of March, still her mind was most occupied by those more recent ones, which surprized her at her return home.—"Her guardian Elizabeth's rejected bride-groom."—

groom."—"Herself accused of having broken off his marriage."—"*Some* offences laid to her charge, which were totally incomprehensible."—"*Others*, of which she was conscious, that her unguarded conduct had made her but too liable to be suspected."—"The Count's violent resentment."—"His threats."—"Expulsion from the Castle of Torrenburg."—"The only choice, allowed her, the cloister for life, or an union with the decrepit Count Egbert."——Poor, poor Ida! how wilt thou find a clue to guide thy bewildered steps aright through such a labyrinth of dangers!

Buried in these melancholy reflections, she heard not the door unlocked, by which her apartments communicated with the public gallery.—At length a *hand gently* removed the handkerchief,

with which she had covered her face. She looked up, and beheld Father Hilarius.

—"Alas! my dear child," said the Friar, "what avails your weeping?—believe me, your affairs are not in so ill a state, as you may imagine; though I cannot but confess, that appearances are greatly against you. Your secret correspondence with Elizabeth has been intercepted: I have tried in vain to convince your guardian, that you were ignorant of his having any concern in the affair. Then he looks on your presence at the marriage, as a personal and designed affront. It appears indeed from one of her letters, that your friend herself was in great doubt, whether you would accept her invitation. At the very time of her giving it, she pointed out the

conveniences of your coming; she warned you, that you would incur your uncle's anger.....And yet in defiance of this warning, you went!—As to the confusion, which your presence produced at the wedding, of that I can make out nothing; you either will not, or *can* not explain the mystery; one thing only I can collect from your account, which is, that you have made a number of enemies there, who will spare no pains to injure you, and to prevent your innocence from being made clear to the Count.—For that you *are* innocent, I have no manner of doubt; and I will venture to assert, that in process of time.... But time indeed, Heaven help us! that is exactly what is refused you—the punishment of your supposed offences will be im-

mediate! the old Count of Montfort arrived here not an hour ago; and your guardian is determined, that to-morrow shall decide the destiny of your future life. Of your guilt he is thoroughly persuaded, and you will be compelled to-morrow to give your hand to Count Egbert, if he will condescend to accept it; or if the old man thinks that your conduct has now made you unworthy of such an honour, you will be immediately confined for life in the Convent of the Grey Penitents near Count Frederick's Thuringian Castle."—

—"And what then must be done?" cried Ida, wringing her hands in fear and agony?—"How can I escape so dreadful a destiny?"—

—"Escape?" repeated the Monk.—"Ha! right! right! my dear child, it

was

was surely Heaven, that inspired you with the thought!—Yes! you must escape; you must fly from the Castle of Torrenburg!"—

—"Escape? fly?"—repeated the bewildered Ida; "and whither must I go?"—

"To a retreat," replied the Monk, "where you may wait in security, till your uncle's resentment is appeased, and your innocence can be made clear to him.—But you shall know more, as we go along. I know a secret passage, by which you may quit the Castle unobserved. Follow me, for you have not a moment to lose!—Nay, come, come! away!"—

Thus saying, he caught the lamp from the table with one hand, and grasping Ida's arm with the other, he

drew her from the chamber.—Bewildered, terrified, she had not presence of mind sufficient to form a resolution; and her exhausted frame was unable to resist the force, with which he urged her forwards, as she followed him through the long galleries, rather passively submitting, than wilfully consenting to his design.

I formerly mentioned, that Count Frederick still resided on the spot, which had once been the habitation of the antient Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans. To this he had chiefly been induced by the beauty of the situation: perhaps too his pride was secretly gratified by the recollection, that his residence was the same with that, whence his ancestors were accustomed to extend the sceptre of command over the surrounding

surrounding provinces, and to set at defiance the resentment of many a sovereign prince, who possest much more lofty-sounding titles but much less real power and strength.—Still the gloomy, half-ruined Castle of Sargans was by no means a mansion suited to the taste of its modern possessor. Accordingly he had levelled to the ground the remains of a wing of this gigantic pile, which had formerly been destroyed by fire, and had erected in its place a stately palace, at once noble in its external form, and convenient in its interior accommodations. This was called the Castle of Torrenburg; while the forsaken halls and towers of Sargans were still distinguished by the name of the "Donat-Fortress." the two buildings were separated by courts of con-

siderable extent; the antient one was in a great measure suffered to go to ruin, except a few apartments which were kept up for the accommodation of domestics, when on solemn occasions the number of guests was too great to be received within the walls of the Count's own residence.

Superstition had not failed to extend her dominion over the Donat-Fortress.—Traditions respecting the former Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans, which had been handed down from father to son, and with which you, Elizabeth, are already well acquainted, furnished subjects sufficient for a thousand wonderful stories. In truth, the prejudice, in favour of the opinion that the ruins were haunted, was so prevalent, that not merely among the Count's

nestics, but even among the inhabi-
ts of the neighbouring villages num-
s of ghost-seers were to be found,
o had beheld at sundry times (and
h their own eyes) the spirits of
elbert and Urania, of Donat, Helen,
l other traditionary personages, wan-
ing among those abandoned halls
moss-grown towers; and they
ured either favourable or inauspici-
events to the reigning possessor,
ording as the vision represented a
y or a Monk, an innocent wife or
haughty tyrant husband.

da's character is naturally extremely
id, and she had not escaped the
tagion of superstitious terrors. It
s therefore with no slight emotion,
t she found her conductor taking
way, which led to the ruins.

—" Whither

—"Whither are you leading me?" said she frequently, as she followed him with trembling steps.—"Whither are you leading me?" she again demanded almost with a shriek; and as she snatched her hand from the Friar's, her blood froze in her veins at perceiving, that she had now past the last of the separating courts, and stood before the massy walls and lofty round towers of the Donat-Fortress, whose colossal portal seemed to stretch wide its enormous jaws, as if for the purpose of devouring her.

Father Hilarius was now compelled to stop for a moment, and support his fainting companion. She reclined her head against his shoulder; and when she had in some degree recovered her spirits, she related to him, that happening

once to be standing in her balcony
midnight, she had seen with her own
s the apparitions of two Monks
e out of the very gate, before
ich they were at that moment stand-
; that they went up to the old well
he corner, whose mouth is over-
wn with moss and weeds, and there
y seemed to vanish; and that upon
ing what she had seen the next
ning, the old portress had related to
a terrible history of two Monks
nging to the Abbey of Curwald,
o were starved to death in a sub-
aneous dungeon by the order of
of the tyrant-counts of Carlsheim;
t their bones were buried in that
ied well, in which Heaven's retri-
ion had ordained, that the murderer
self should perish; and that ever

since

since that time, the place had been haunted by the ghosts of the two unfortunate Friars.

Father Hilarius, who frequently made use of the deserted fortress, when he had any secret business to transact, could have easily removed the miraculous part of the appearances, which Ida had seen; but it did not suit his plans to quiet her anxiety by letting her into the truth. He contented himself with painting in the strongest colours the dangers, which awaited her on her return to the Count's abode; and with reminding her, that her only chance of avoiding those dangers was an instantaneous flight by means, whose terrors were merely imaginary.

The priest, in spite of all his seeming

simplicity,

simplicity, was by no means deficient in eloquence. His descriptions were so lively, and his arguments came so home to her feelings, that Ida was soon convinced, that she could meet with no ghost more terrible or more hideous than the old Count of Montfort. She therefore resolved to follow her guide without further remonstrance, and only requested that she might shut her eyes, and clasp one of his hands with both of hers in the form of a cross, which holy sign (she doubted not) would scare all evil spirits away. To this he consented, and promised to inform her when she should be arrived in a place of safety, and might relieve herself from this voluntary loss of sight.

As they proceeded, the Monk lighted several torches of yellow wax, which

were fastened at intervals against the sides of a long passage, opening into a large hall; he took the same precaution, as he ascended a lofty marble staircase; and as soon as he entered a spacious saloon, he lost no time in illuminating twelve large chandeliers of brass, which were suspended from the roof.—He now desired Ida to open her eyes, and look round her.

He could not have pitched upon a better method for dissipating Ida's fears of ghosts and goblins. Darkness is the mother of causeless terror; with the return of light, courage and confidence return to the trembling heart. The lamp, with which the Friar was still busied in lighting the last chandelier, assured her, that there was nothing supernatural in the light, by which she

found

found herself surrounded; and her heart expanded with the agreeable impression, produced upon her by this sudden and unexpected splendour.

She had always pictured to herself the Donat-Fortress, as the residence of crows, bats, and screech-owls, a gloomy chaos of dirt, and dust, and fragments of moth-eaten furniture. How greatly then was she surprized to find, that though everything in truth was faded and antiquated, yet nothing could be more magnificent than the saloon, which she was then examining. It was hung with tapestry richly wrought and adorned with pictures, on whose frames gold and carving had been lavished most profusely: and through the open door she looked out upon the illuminated marble staircase, and down the

long

long gallery, whose vista of lights presented an object at once noble and agreeable. Father Hilarius advised her to repose herself for a few minutes, and conducted her to an elevated seat under a canopy, which seemed like a throne.

—" It was here," said he " that the antient lords of the ten jurisdictions were accustomed to receive the homage of their vassals, while that anti-chamber was thronged with their knights and retainers; and it was from yonder side-chambers, that crouds of the noblest dames and damsels of the country looked out, and admired the magnificence of the powerful Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans."—

Ida would not cast a single glance towards the side-chambers, where the dames and damsels of former days

used

ed to assemble, for in these there were
› torches; and she could not help
aring, lest she should discover in them
me inhabitant of the other world
ade visible by the light of his own
rning brimstone. She therefore con-
nued to look towards the illuminated
llery, and listened with pleased atten-
on to Father Hilarius, while he dwelt
pon the brighter parts of the family
aditions, and by descriptions of splen-
id feasts and stately tournaments,
ontrived to beguile the trembling girl
f her terrors.

—" But we forget ourselves," said
he Monk at length, suddenly breaking
off his narration, " we must not suffer
day-light to surprise us in these un-
tenanted apartments, where we should
undoubtedly be sought after, and then

if found what would be the consequence? you would be consigned to the arms of the decrepit Egbert, while I should be sent back to my Convent with indignation by your uncle. Come, lady, come! follow me, where peace and security await your arrival."—

—"Lead on, good father!" replied Ida; "be you but my guide, and I will not hesitate to follow."—

—"Good!" said Hilarius; and then extinguishing some of the lights, he took them from the chandeliers.—"Then take special care of these tapers; they will be necessary for us on the way, by which we must escape. Now then hasten onwards, and be alarmed at nothing, which you may encounter. Be assured, there is no real danger."—

Thus saying, he gave her a small

basket.

ket, which already appeared to con-
n some provisions, and in which he
w deposited the tapers. These pre-
rations for a long journey through
omy ways were by no means calcu-
ed to preserve in Ida's mind that
porary tranquillity, which it had
lately recovered. An involuntary
ddering seized her; and as he lighted
r forwards, he assured her so often
his acting honestly by her, that she
gan to suspect, that it must be his
tention to deceive her.

They at length reached the most
mote quarter of the Donat-Fortress,
hich by no means corresponded with
ıe magnificence of those apartments, by
hich she had approached it. Here noth-
ıg was to be seen but winding staircases,
arrow passages, low roofs, and gloomy
vaulted

vaulted dungeons, without end or number, whose labyrinth bewildered her memory, and whose aspect appalled her imagination. Most of them bore the strongest marks of the ravages of time: and now they entered an immense chamber, which according to the Monk's account had at one period been the bedroom of the Countess Urania, and of many of the ladies, her successors.—A large vacant alcove still decorated with the remnants of silken curtains, appeared to have once been intended to contain a bed, and confirmed the assertion of Father Hilarius; an assertion, which the other ornaments of the room seemed calculated to contradict. Swords, spears, and coats of mail were fastened against the walls, and gave the apartment more the appearance of a well-furnished ar-

moury, than of a lady's bed chamber. Ida was on the point of asking the meaning of such unusual decorations, when her conductor removed a part of the worm-eaten tapestry, and opened a concealed door, through which she descried a staircase descending to a far greater depth, than her eye could reach.

—"Here is our way," said Hilarius, "tremble not, my child, but follow me without hesitation.—A few hours will place you in safety."—

Ida shrunk back, and weeping through extreme terror, inquired, whether this was the only means of escaping?—The Friar, who had already found out the quickest method of removing her apprehensions, descended part of the staircase, and as he past, kindled some tapers

fixed on the ballustrade. This experiment succeeded, as it had done before—Ida ventured down a few steps, and the Monk returned to assist her to descend the remainder; when suddenly springing past her, he rushed up the staircase, and passing through the door, closed it after him with a loud noise.

How the blood ran cold in the poor girl's veins, when she found herself forsaken by her guide; how she hastened after him, in hopes of inducing him by entreaties to release her from this unexpected captivity; how she shuddered at being able to discover no traces of the concealed door; and how she at length sank down upon the steps in agony and despair, when she found no answer returned to her shrieks for relief and mercy, all this I need not

describe to Elizabeth: her own good and tender heart will make her feel for the situation of a young creature, by nature the most fearful of her sex, exposed to all the horrors of night, solitude, and silence, at the entrance of a chain of gloomy caverns, whose existence till that moment had been unknown to her, and with whose outlet she was totally unacquainted.

Though she received no answer, she was certain, that her entreaties for help were not unheard by the unpitying Friar. She could plainly distinguish his footsteps, as he hastened away from the chamber; and the noise of closing doors and of bolts shooting back into their fastenings left her no room to doubt her being totally abandoned.

Ida was herself unconscious, how much time elapsed, before she could summon strength of mind sufficient to reflect, how it would be most advisable for her to conduct herself in this perilous situation. Undoubtedly, before she could recover from the shock, a considerable period must have elapsed; for when she at length looked around her, she perceived, that the torches were on the point of expiring. The dread of being left in total darkness recalled her to herself: she sprang from the ground, and lost no time in kindling one of the tapers, with which the Monk (who was far from wishing her destruction) had providently supplied her basket.

—"He does not then desire my death?" said she, as she saw the flame rise bright and cheerful, and a kind of

doubtful

doubtful joy infused itself into her almost frozen heart.

This persuasion was confirmed, when faintness compelled her to examine the contents of her basket. Father Hilarius (who was no enemy to the pleasures of the table) had furnished it, as if he had been catering for himself: the provisions were the most delicate of their kind, and a small flask of costly and cordial wine had not been forgotten. Now then she began to think, what could have been his object in conducting her to this gloomy abode? It was evident, that he had not left her there to perish through hunger: was it possible, that he had meant honestly by her, and that this was really the best path, which she could take to quit the Castle? Suddenly, *it struck* her, that during their

midnight wandering the Monk had frequently mentioned a subterraneous passage, which conducted to a small hamlet inhabited in former times by holy Hermits, and now the abode of simple villagers scarcely less pure in manners than their predecessors. He had described this passage to her with such minuteness, that she could not but suppose his account to have contained instructions for the direction of her progress; she had at the time paid but little attention to his remarks, not conceiving that she was at all interested in the subject; but she now carefully mustered up every hint which he had let fall, and employed her whole strength of mind in recalling the instructions, which he had given with such apparent indifference.

Having at length traced the map of her road on her imagination sufficiently to make her hope, that she should be able to find her way through the gloomy labyrinth, she ventured to begin her journey. She carefully avoided various low-vaulted passages, which presented themselves on either side of her, and which Father Hilarius had already warned her not to enter; as he said, that they only led to small dungeons, in which many victims of the tyrant Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans had breathed their last, and which now formed the unwholsome abode of toads, snakes, and other loathsome reptiles. Apprehensive that her light might fail her, before she could reach the outlet of these caverns, she fled onwards with all her speed, and hoped with every mo-

ment, that the next would show her the magnificent tomb, raised by Count Herman of Werdenberg in honour of his wife the lady Emmeline, who had been long imprisoned in this subterraneous abode. The sight of this monument would assure her, that she had not mistaken the way; and the Monk had told her, that she would there find three paths branching out, of which the middle one would conduct her without a turning to the cavern's mouth.

But still she hastened on, and still one taper after the other was consumed, and still the tomb was not to be descried! Sleep, and fatigue from the length of the way, began to operate upon her with force almost irresistible; yet did she not dare to close her eyes, lest during her slumber the taper should burn out,

and leave her in absolute darkness to wander through the long chain of dungeons and passages, till she perished. In this painful situation her only advantage was, that her imaginary fears gradually subsided. Custom and necessity are frequently the parents of virtue; and Ida, the timid superstitious Ida, who so lately could only traverse the chambers of the Donat-Fortress with eyes closed, hands crost, and knees trembling, was now able to tread firmly, as she hurried along, and feared not to gaze steadfastly on the surrounding gloom, with which she was now become familiar.

The poor wanderer could only judge from the consumption of her tapers, that she must have journeyed for a considerable time, and that the mouth of

the caverns could be at no great distance —this belief was confirmed, when she perceived a faint pale light glimmering through the obscurity of a narrow passage, which lay before her. The sight inspired her with renewed vigour. She hastened towards the gleam: but how did her spirits fail her, when after proceeding for some minutes down the passage she found, that the light proceeded (not from the day, as she had fondly hoped) but from a lamp, which served to illuminate with its blue rays a place, the sight of which a few days sooner would have made her swoon with horror, and upon which even now she had but too much reason to look with apprehension and disgust.

It was a round vaulted room, whose sides were hollowed out into niches, in

each

each of which a coffin was placed; while here and there the eye rested on a stately marble monument adorned with carved work and statues.—Ida shrieked, and the taper fell from her hand.

—"Now then," she exclaimed, "I am lost indeed! What said the Monk? —Above all, avoid a narrow passage, which lies towards the left; it conducts into the burying-place of a convent. Should you stray thither, and be discovered by the Nuns, the object of your flight will be lost irrecoverably, and you will only have exchanged one prison for another. The Abbess is entirely devoted to your uncle's interests, and will not hesitate to restore you to his power.——Alas! alas!" she continued, wringing her hands, "how plainly do I now remember every word of his warn-

ing, though at the time I little thought of how much consequence it was to my safety!—Now remembrance comes too late! I am fallen into the toils: speedy flight indeed might perhaps yet save me; but sleep sits too heavy on my eyelids, and my wearied limbs are unable to bear me further.—I must yield to the impulse, and repose for a few moments, for I am fatigued almost unto death!——then should no one discover me during my slumbers, when I awake, I can re-kindle my taper at yonder lamp, and shall be able to pursue my pilgrimage with recruited strength and courage."—

She then lay down upon the floor near her extinguished taper, resting her head against an adjacent tomb; nor was it long before she sank into a profound sleep. Little till then did Ida believe it possi-

ble.

ble, that she could sleep among graves and coffins! Still less was she aware, how near she was at that moment to safety and protection! Oh! how would her sorrowing heart have been lightened, had she known, that a few hours must necessarily compel one of her best friends to enter her gloomy resting-place; one, who at that moment was grieving at the relation of her flight from the Castle of Torrenburg, which had reached him under the most scandalous mis-representations, and who was in the most painful uncertainty respecting her fate and the means of saving and supporting her. Ida had unconsciously wandered into the cemetery belonging to the Abbey of Curwald, which was under the direction of her friend and guardian, Abbot Conrad.—

Conrad!—Oh! how eagerly would he have hastened to embrace and comfort the poor forlorn-one, could some kind angel have whispered to him in a dream. —" Ida, the unfortunate much-injured Ida slumbers among the mouldering bones of the Abbots of Cloister-Curwald!"—

Conrad had dispatched messengers on all sides in pursuit of Ida, as soon as he received the news of her flight, which Count Frederick transmitted to him without delay. It seems, that what Father Hilarius dreaded with so much reason, had actually taken place at the Castle of Torrenburg. No sooner was the first burst of passion over, than the Count's justice made him resolve to give his accused niece a personal hearing —the morning had scarcely dawned,

when

when he sought her apartments. Her favourite attendant was ordered to apprize her mistress of his approach: great was his astonishment, when the maid returned extremely agitated, and informed him, that Ida was no where to be found. Father Hilarius was immediately sent for; and his explanation of Ida's motives for flight of course was such, as served greatly to increase his patron's indignation, and throw a still deeper shade upon the character and conduct of the fugitive. Elizabeth's bridegroom had disappeared, immediately after rejecting her hand at the altar; Ida was now become equally invisible: it required no great ingenuity to connect these two events together. Nothing could appear more probable, than that Ida had eloped with Henry,

and

and that she was gone to form an union built upon the ruined happiness of her best friends, and to exult at having duped those, whose good-natured simplicity had prevented them from suspecting her designs.—Count Frederick's generous heart was shocked beyond expression, when he thus saw the offences of his niece presented before him in such gigantic enormity.

—"Monstrous!" he exclaimed! "inconceivable! first she plunges a dagger in the breast of her benefactor, by robbing him of the woman whom he adored; next she stabs her dearest friend to the heart by seducing away the bridegroom, into whose arms she had herself delivered her! now then she believes, that her infernal work is complete; she knows well, that all ideas of an union

between

between me and Elizabeth are prevented for ever; she doubts not, that vexation and disappointed love will soon conduct me to the grave; and then she means to divide my rich inheritance with the partner of her iniquities, the false capricious perjured Montfort!"—

Father Hilarius now stepped forward, and represented to him, that it only depended upon himself to ruin the plans of those, who had so grossly offended him; and that as to his union with Elizabeth, he for his part saw no impossibility in the case. The Count eagerly desired him to explain his meaning; and the obedient Monk proceeded to prove with the whole force of his eloquence, that Elizabeth deserved pity rather than blame for her share in *these transactions*; that she had been

been seduced from her duty more by Ida's arts than by her own inclinations; and he declared his perfect conviction, that if the Count would now condescend to make the first advance towards a reconciliation, he would find her as full of penitence for her error, as grateful for his proffered affection, and as eager to unite with him in a plan of mutual revenge, as even the Count himself could desire.—Nor did he make this last assertion rashly. Father Jacob had already apprized him, that every thing at the Castle of March was favourable to their views; and he advised Hilarius to send his patron thither without loss of time, in order that Elizabeth's resentment (upon which he chiefly grounded his hopes of success) might not be allowed time to cool.

Count Frederick took the Friar's advice, which was greatly strengthened by a supposed vision of the Patron Saint of Torrenburg, who had condescended in a dream that very night to assure Father Hilarius, that the consequence of a visit to the Castle of March would be an union with the lovely Elizabeth. Accordingly the Count lost no time in setting out to renew his once-rejected proposals, habited as a bridegroom, and attended by a princely retinue. In the mean while the worthy house-chaplain did not even allow himself time enough to say his paternoster, before he dispatched letters to the Bishop of Coira and Abbot Conrad, in which he related the flight of their ward, the Lady Ida of Werdenberg, in all *its circumstances*; stating also the

alledged

alledged motives and supposed consequences of this step, and above all not forgetting to place every circumstance in the light most unfavourable to the Heroine of the Tale. As they perused these letters, the Abbot and the good Bishop alternately felt indignation at Ida's errors, pity for her misfortunes, and anxiety for the dangers in which she had involved herself. Willingly would they have believed her innocent; but appearances were too strong against her, and the Abbot little imagined, that the only person capable of removing the suspicions, which he was so anxious to efface, at that very moment reposed so near him.

In the mean while Ida awoke greatly refreshed by a sound sleep of several hours. She re-kindled her taper, and

sumed her anxious journey; yet she layed it for a few moments, while e endeavoured to read the inscriptions the monuments, and ascertain to hat order the Abbess belonged, whom arius had described to her in such ious and terrific colours. These arly exprest, that the tombs were sed in honour of the former Abbots Cloister-Curwald, in whose cemetery he was standing at that moment: what lessed information for her agitated eart!—the door was unguarded.— marble staircase conducted to the nterior of the Abbey!—But alas! the nscriptions were composed in the Latin nguage.—Ida vainly endeavoured to omprehend the meaning; and a few noments sufficing to convince her, that er endeavours must be vain, the poor

wanderer

wanderer turned away from the neighbourhood of her friend, and hastened to meet her ruin.

With trembling limbs and an heart almost bursting with anxiety, she pursued her gloomy path. She continued to proceed for a considerable time; and her last taper was almost expiring, when its beams fell upon the object, which she had wished to behold so long and so anxiously. She was now certain of having followed the right path, for she saw at a distance the monument of her progenitrix, the noble Emmeline of Sargans.

The polished and shining surface of the white marble reflected from afar the gleam of Ida's taper—the pilgrim hastened towards it with eager joy, not untempered by religious awe and

reverential terror. With scarce-heard foot-fall, as if she dreaded to disturb the dead silence of a place thus sanctified, did Ida ascend the steps leading to this memorial, raised in honour of faithful love and long suffering. It was some minutes, before she could resolve on venturing near enough to examine the statues, with which it was adorned. On one side stood a female angel (the counterpart of the lovely Emmeline) who trod under her feet the symbols of cruelty and voluptuousness, and who extended to a kneeling warrior her right hand, on whose wrist was still fastened part of the chain, which *he* had broken.—On the opposite side appeared the same warrior, who with looks of gratitude held a ring towards Heaven, probably *in allusion* to the prophetic dream,

dream, which had guided Herman of Werdenberg to the deliverance of his mistress.

—" Spirits of my ancestors!" exclaimed Ida, as overpowered by her sensations she sank on the loftiest step, and kist the hallowed marble; " spirits of Herman and Emmeline, hear the prayer of your forsaken persecuted daughter! *I* suffer now, as *you* once suffered;—*I* am innocent, as *you* were then!—save me, ye blessed-ones! save the heiress of your sorrows!"—

Ida prayed long and fervently.—When she arose, she found that her last taper was exhausted, and had left her in total darkness; this however gave her little concern. The religious duties, in which she had just been engaged, had inspired her heart with

enthusiastic

enthusiastic courage: besides, she knew well, that of the three ways branching out of the circular vault in which she was at that moment, she had only to chuse the middle one, which (as Father Hilarius had informed her) would conduct her straight to the outlet of the subterraneous passages. She ascertained easily by examining the walls, which of the three was the proper path to take, and then hastened boldly forwards; for she was now persuaded, that the invisible spirits of her ancestors hovered over her, and she dreaded no danger, while protected by those celestial guardians.

The Monk had told her true—the way was straight and unembarrassed with windings: it soon began to ascend, and the delighted wanderer could at

length discover the faint glimmering of daylight, through the distant opening. But alas! however near may be the goal of our wishes, who shall dare to count himself secure of reaching it!—Ida had for some minutes heard a dead hollow noise behind her, and the ill-boding sounds had already occasioned her sufficient anxiety to make her double her speed. Still the noise became more audible: and now she could plainly distinguish the steps of men, whose arms clattered, as they past along. She looked back, and could perceive the glimmering of faint lights at a distance. She rushed forwards with increased rapidity: the sounds, which became every moment louder, convinced her, not only that she was pursued, but that her pursuers gained upon her.—Fortu-

nately,

nately, the opening was now at hand; she summoned up all her strength and activity to reach it, sprang through it, and found herself once more restored to air and light.

—"Praised be Heaven, I am safe!" she exclaimed: when at that moment she felt a cold hand seize her by the arm.—She shrieked, and fell on the earth senseless.

It was long, before her recollection returned. When she again unclosed her eyes, she found herself no longer in the open air. She was placed upon a kind of couch, in what she supposed to be a tent; a group of men of terrible and savage aspect surrounded her; and seated on a chest at no great distance, she perceived a warrior in complete armour, whose raised visor showed a

countenance wild, 'tis true, but still noble and commanding.

—" At length then we have found her!" said the warrior in a tone of exultation—" the lovely pilgrim is in our power, whom we so long sought in vain through yon gloomy vaults and subterraneous passages.—You are welcome, fair lady: Father Hilarius gave us notice, that we might expect your visit; and I rejoice to find, that the description which he gave us of your charms, was far from exaggerated."—

—" Have mercy on my distress, Sir Knight!" cried Ida, who now rose from her seat with difficulty, and sank at his feet, while she extended her fettered hands in supplication towards him.

—" Father Hilarius assured me," she continued, " that I should find the habi-

tation of some holy Hermits near the cavern's mouth: oh! if any such habitation really exists, in pity guide me thither!"—

—"Compose yourself, lovely girl," answered the stranger.—"Hilarius has not deceived you, neither has he deceived *us*.—He promised us the possession of a treasure, and he has kept his word, though we mean to make a better use of it than that, for which he consigned it over to us. He promised *you*, that you should find here the habitation of certain Hermits; and he told you true, for you are actually in a Hermitage at this moment: many years ago was this the retreat of some fugitive Monks, who were obliged to seclude themselves from the intercourse of mankind; and it still forms an abode

for a band of daring and persecuted spirits, whom tyranny and injustice have banished from the world. We too are Hermits, though not quite such holy ones as those, whom you excepted to meet. But what does that signify? saints, or sinners, I warrant, you will fare better in our society, than you would with any company of Monks, that ever concealed hypocrisy under sackcloth.—Take this as a specimen of the whole canting-tribe. Father Hilarius has commissioned us to remove you so far from this province, that your face may never be seen here again: we have engaged to convey you to a place, where beauty like yours is always a marketable commodity, and sure of fetching a heavy price: but you are too fair, too good, too noble, to be

sacrificed

sacrificed to the embraces of an infidel! no, child! we mean to do better for you. You shall remain with *us*, and your priestly enemy shall be foiled in his treacherous designs."—

—"First understand," interrupted Ida, whose indignation in spite of grief and terror burst forth upon hearing this insolent declaration of the outlaw; "first understand, to *whom* you speak! I am no ordinary captive, no low-born girl the fit associate for a band of robbers!—you see in me the niece of Count Frederick of Torrenburg!"—

—"Indeed?" replied the outlaw,—"are you then *really* Count Frederick's niece?—why, to let you into the whole secret, we were told as much, though we did not give the Monk full credit, and suspected *that* part of his story to

be an invention for the purpose of obtaining a better price.—But since you are in truth the person whom he mentioned, so much the better; your rank and expectations make your possession doubly valuable. I have no sort of objection to exchange my precarious mode of life for security and opulence, nor by laying aside the title of captain of a band of outlaws to claim that of Count of Torrenburg in right of my wife, its lovely heiress. With the assistance of my companions I will reinstate you in your rights; the previous possession of your hand and person will entitle me to share your good fortune; and I shall be indebted to you for my restoration to my proper rank in society, which necessity has for some time past compelled me unwillingly to

sign. Now then you are apprized of my whole plan, which suggested itself as soon as Hilarius informed us of your rank, and in which I am fully confirmed by the powerful impression produced upon my heart by your beauty."—

He paused: Ida only answered with her tears—after a few minutes past in expectation of her reply, the robber has resumed his discourse.

—" You are silent? you weep?—Ha! perhaps you are offended that your hands are fettered?—be comforted; those white hands shall instantly be restored to liberty!—instantly undo those bonds, barbarians that you are! how could it come into your heads, that it was necessary to bind a poor defenceless girl, whose escape is so impossible?—Shame upon your flinty hearts, how

could you bear to treat so inhumanly such innocence and such charms!"—

The other robbers now hurried to remove the fetters; but their captain drove them away with curses, and declared, that from that moment no one except himself should dare to approach his lovely captive on pain of instantaneous death.—He then kissed the unbound hands of Ida, led her respectfully into another tent, and there left her alone, after entreating her to compose her agitated spirits, and assuring her, that she might rely upon meeting from him with none but the most honourable treatment.

Ida, equally overcome with mental and bodily fatigue, sank into a state of unconsciousness and stupor, which the sentinels who were appointed to guard

the entrance of her tent (and who from time to time looked in upon their charge) interpreted to be a tranquil sleep, and failed not to bring this welcome intelligence to their captain.—He received it with the highest satisfaction, hailed this refreshing slumber as the first step towards the restoration of tranquillity, doubted not that he should find Ida more composed and resigned to her fate on his evening visit, and found her almost frantic through despair.

The peremptory manner in which Ida rejected his adresses, and the little progress which he made in reconciling her to her present situation, grieved the robber-chief to the very heart, but did not excite his indignation. He continued to treat her with the utmost

respect and attention. Nothing was denied her except liberty; and Randolf (for that was the name of the enamoured outlaw) carried his politeness and deference so far, that he never even presumed to enter her tent without having previously obtained her permision.

Ida, whose presence of mind gradually returned, and who became collected enough to reflect on the best means of conducting herself in such difficult circumstances, could not but feel, that such attention on the part of Randolf required some return on hers. She was totally in his power; it was unwise to exasperate him; and she therefore judged it prudent to allow him permission to pay her a daily visit of an hour, since she feared with reason, that without

out this voluntary concession he might be induced to allow himself greater liberties without asking her leave.

—"May I, lady," said he one morning, after she had past some days in his power; "may I request permission to present to you one of my friends, who holds in this society the next place to myself?—he is a nobleman, whom misfortunes have compelled like me to adopt a mode of life, which we both look upon with abhorrence, and which with the first opportunity we are determined to exchange for one more honourable."—

Ida was sufficiently aware, that the *opportunity* to which he alluded, was the possession of her hand, by which he hoped to give himself a claim to the Count of Torrenburg's rich inheri-

tance. He frequently in conversation threw out hints of this nature, but which she judged it most wise to let pass without observation. She now only answered that part of his speech, which regarded the introduction of his friend, and to which (as she feared to irritate her jailor by a refusal) she gave an unwilling consent.

On his next visit he was accompanied by a man, whose countenance was much more wild and his manners much less prepossessing, than those of Randolf. The latter presented the new visitor by the name of Sir Gero of Altheim.

The captive soon understood from the conversation, which past between the associates, that the antipathy, which Gero's first appearance had excited in

her

her bosom, had not been excited without good grounds. He possest not the smallest share of that delicacy and respectful attention, by which her lover was characterized. He permitted himself to make the most licentious and offensive observations upon the extraordinary charms of her person, and raised her original disgust to abhorrence by blaming Randolf for having suffered his passion to remain so long ungratified; assuring him at the same time, that he would have dealt far differently with his own lovely mistress, had not her religious habit terrified him from using force, and thereby drawing down the vengeance of offended Heaven.—For it seems, this wretch, though he trampled upon all laws human and divine, was still a slave to the grossest

superstition,

superstision, and trembled at the very sight of a veil or a rosary.

—" She has now been some days in your possession," observed Randolf; " have you made any progress with the fair Nun ?"—

" Not I !" replied Gero ; " she is a miracle of beauty, its true, but her obstinacy equals her charms. Since the day that I captured her on the road to Zurich, I have been able to obtain nothing from her but tears and entreaties for her liberty : and as to proceeding to violence, I am too much afraid of the resentment of holy mother church, or I should put an end to her resistance before to-morrow morning."—

During this conversation Ida remained silent, and abandoned herself to the melancholy reflections excited by the

increased

increased consciousness of the execrable society, of which she was so unfortunately become a member. But now when she found that she had a companion in misfortune, and that a person of her own sex (a virtuous and persecuted Nun) was so near her, a sentiment of secret satisfaction and hope infused itself into her bosom.

"Oh! Sir Knight," she exclaimed, addressing herself to Randolf, "how happy would you make me, could you but procure for me the company of Sir Gero's captive! it is disgraceful, it is dreadful, for a young maiden to be alone in a society entirely composed of men and strangers; and I feel, that the presence of a person of my own sex would be to me a source of the greatest consolation! it would conduce beyond all else

to make me endure my confinement with resignation! oh! good Sir Randolf, plead for me with your friend, and persuade him to allow me this unexpected pleasure!"—

The smile, with which she accompanied this request ('twas the first which played upon her lips, since she became a captive) was irresistible. As she pronounced the last word, she extended her hand towards him, and he kissed it with rapture. A wish, exprest in a manner so fascinating and so unlooked for, was a law to the enamoured robber; and addressing himself immediately to his companion, he enforced her request with so much energy, that Gero though with a sorry grace found himself compelled to grant it.

—"Now then" said Randolf, as he left

left the tent with Gero," now then you can judge for yourself, which of our modes of treating our captives is the most likely to succeed at the long run. When did your Nun ever speak to you with such gentleness, or favour you with so sweet a smile? when did she ever extend her hand towards you of her own accord, and suffer you to press your lips upon it? credit me, Gero; send her to my mistress, and I will bet my head upon it, that before long half her obstinacy and aversion will have disappeared. You see, how complaisant I have made the lady Ida; and it only requires a little kindness and flattery well applied to make our religious ladies, just as tame and as obliging as their sisters of the wicked world."—

In the course of the day Randolf returned

returned to inform Ida, that she must not expect the visit of the captive Nun till after mid ight.

—" My friend," said he, " is obliged to keep it a profound secret from the greatest part of our companions, that such a prisoner is in his possession. That he has a mistress, indeed, they are aware; but it would make a terrible uproar in our community, were it known that Gero had carried off a Nun; and many among our associates; who would think nothing of half a dozen murders, would expect the rocks to fall and crush us the very next moment, for daring to lay sacrilegious hands upon a damsel dedicated to Heaven. To be sure, we violated no sanctuary to get at her, for we found her trotting along the high road, when she ought to

ave been quiet within the walls of her convent: but still the very sight of a veil has such influence over the common rabble, that Gero does not think it prudent to bring her to your court except under the protecting shadow of night. He also implores you by me to reward him for this compliance with your wishes, by persuading her to lend a more favourable ear to his passion: he is also desirous of learning her name, which hitherto she has obstinately concealed; and above all he is anxious, that she should lay aside her religious habit, which hourly exposes him to danger from his superstitious associates. I know, what you are going to observe: you believe, that it is nothing but respect for this habit, which preserves her from Gero's violence; but I swear to

you by everything that is most sacred and solemn, that neither she nor yourself have anything to fear from the men who adore you. Our intentions towards you are the most honourable: we have great designs in hand, whose nature I am not as yet permitted to disclose to you; but be assured, that should they succeed, the Countess of Werdenberg and the fair Nun will have reason to bless the day when they fell into our hands, and thus escaped the being immured for life within the gloomy walls of a Convent; a fate, from which *she* has been rescued, and to which *you* were doomed."—

The prudent Ida, (who saw that favours, which had cost her so little, were so well rewarded by her grateful admirer) took good care not to con-

tradict

tradict the robber. She answered him by a thousand thanks for his intercession with Gero, and for his assurances of regard for her welfare; and she then dismissed him with a smile so gracious and so sweet, as riveted his chains for ever. When beauty, and sense are united in the same woman, alas! what puppets in her hands are the mighty lords of the creation!

Midnight arrived—the hearts of both the captives throbbed with impatience for the moment of meeting, though they knew not, what made them so impatient. Never seemed time to move so slowly with Ida, as while she waited for the stranger's arrival; and on her side the lovely Nun quite trembled with joy, while she followed her conductors to the tent, in which (so Gero

had informed her,) she should find a companion in captivity, whose heart was prepared to sympathize in her misfortunes—the robbers conducted her to the door of the tent; but thinking it would be most agreeable to the ladies, that their first interview should pass without intruders, they suffered her to enter alone.

It was well for both the captives, that this meeting took place without witnesses.—Ida was sitting in a melancholy posture, when she heard an approaching footstep.—She started up, and beheld by the pale gleams of her lamp a tall light figure, whose face was covered with a thick veil, advancing from the entrance of the tent. She hastened to meet her, but uttering a loud cry, she started back again. The

religious habit worn by the stranger was but too well known to her.—It was the long grey garment decorated with a golden cross upon the breast, in which she had so often seen the Nuns gliding through the cloisters of Engelberg; and the white veil, edged with black and falling to the very ground, was of that particular form appropriated to the order of the Zurich Sisters. The veil was now hastily thrown back; Ida gazed eagerly upon the Stranger's features, and astonishment, joy, and tenderness were carried to the highest pitch.

—"Constantia!" exclaimed Ida.—"Oh! Heaven! it is my Constantia!"—

—"Ida! my Ida!" shrieked the Nun, and clasped her almost fainting sister to her bosom.

And now the Sisters wept for joy to think, that they were once more united; and now they wept for grief at reflecting, that this union had only made each a partner in the other's captivity. At length having sufficiently collected their scattered thoughts, they made mutual enquiries as to the events, which had produced a meeting so unexpected. Ida related the long and fearful tale of adventures, which had so rapidly crouded upon her since Elizabeth's wedding: on the other hand, Constantia briefly stated, that on her way back to her Convent at Zurich, her party had been encountered by a band of robbers: the Cloister-Vassals, whom the Abbess had sent to protect her, were soon put to flight; and thus was she brought into the hands of Gero,

whom she had the misfortune to inspire with so violent a passion, that he purchased her from his companions with his share of the booty arising from the whole produce of their excursion.

The night past away in mutual congratulations on this meeting so unexpected; and when morning broke, they recollected, that their plans for the future were still unarranged. They had now only time to settle, that as the knowledge of Ida's rank had only served to make the robbers consider her possession as of double value, it would be most prudent to conceal Constantia's real title; and accordingly she resolved to resume her former appellation of Mary Tell, an appellation under which she had past the only happy part of her existence.

When Randolf the next morning inquired of Ida, what she thought of the fair Nun, she replied, that her society was extremely pleasing, and would be much more so, were it not for a certain coldness and reserve, which probably would wear off upon further acquaintance. In a few days she informed Gero, that she had discovered the name of his mistress to be Mary Tell; and thus did Constantia avoid the dangerous importance attached to the title of a Countess of Werdenberg. By her sister's advice, she abated somewhat of the haughty coldness, with which she had hitherto repress the addresses of her ferocious lover; though they both judged it unwise for her to comply with his request, that she should lay aside her religious habit. This had hitherto been

the

the means of protecting her against more violent means of enforcing his passion; and they were of opinion, that too many restraints could not well be imposed upon an affection so ill-regulated as the sentiment, which Gero dignified with the name of love. However, gentle looks and expressions of gratitude for his attentions were not occasionally refused by Constantia: Gero had been so little accustomed to be thus mildly treated by her, that even these trifling condescensions appeared to him of inestimable value; and when in return for his assurances of future respect, she one day deigned to extend towards him her alabaster hand, the robber was so transported, that he took the first opportunity of thanking her upon his knees for a change, which he attri-

buted entirely to her powerful influence, and which he implored her to exert still further in his behalf.

—"Noble lady," said he, "you have often heard Randolf hint, that we have great plans in agitation, whose chief object is the promotion of your interests; nor are they unconnected with the happiness of myself and my adorable Nun. A dreadful oath forbids my saying more on this subject at present; but rest assured, when the time for explanation arrives, that explanation will be such, as must perforce content you. In the mean while suffer me to make to you one request. It is necessary for the success of our undertaking, that yourself and the lovely Mary (together with our jewels, gold, and all things which we possess of value) should be removed

from this valley to a retreat at some distance. During the journey, and your residence at this new abode, promise me, that you will keep a watchful eye over your fair companion, on whose attachment I can by no means rely with the same confidence, which Randolf places on yours. In this respect, he is far more fortunate than his friend; since the kind reception, which he never fails to meet from you, in spite of the awe with which your modest air and dignified demeanour inspires him, leaves but little doubt, that you are sensible of his worth, and will in time be disposed to reward so steady an attachment. Besides this, I am convinced, that you have too much solid understanding to think of escaping from a place, whose very nature will convince

you on your arrival, that any such attempt must be unsuccessful: but no one can say, what dangerous impossibilities a Nun may not be induced to undertake, animated by religious enthusiasm, and confident in the supposed protection of the Saint, to whom her service is dedicated. These illusions may heat her brain, till she desperately braves every peril, overlooks every difficulty, and will draw down inevitable ruin on her own existence, while she leaves me to lament over my baffled hopes. Then mark me, Lady!—watch over Mary's steps with unceasing assiduity: when we again meet, restore her to me safe and lovely, as I now leave her; or never hope to see yourself reinstated in your claims by the valour of my arms and those of my compani-

ons, nor restored to society by the acknowledged title of Countess of Werdenberg, and heiress of the wide domains of Torrenburg, Carlsheim, and Sargans."—

This speech, which was begun in a kneeling posture and in the softest tone, which a voice so naturally rough could adopt, assumed as it proceeded an air of menace, and was terminated by Gero with a terrible frown and a loud stroke upon the brazen pommel of his sword. Nearly the same discourse was repeated to her in the evening, (though conveyed in much milder language) by Randolf. She delivered such a reply, as circumstances compelled her to give, and trembled, as she listened to some obscure hints and disjointed observations, which fell from the outlaw, but which no soli-

citations could induce him to explain. However, she had heard enough to excite in her mind the most painful apprehensions, though not enough to certify their being well-grounded.

The preparations for setting out were soon completed: the treasures were packed up; and the Sisters were now informed, that the place of their destination was a narrow valley situated in the heart of the Mountains of Hapsburg. Gero and Randolf took a tender but respectful leave of the fair travellers, who were escorted by a small band of soldiers, composed of such members of this lawless society as were unfitted by advanced years for taking part in that great undertaking, to assist in which, the young and active were detained. The ladies set forward, but not till Ida

had made some observstions, which rendered her doubly impatient to commence her journey.

—"Oh! my sister," she said, as soon as she found an opportunity of conversing without being overheard, "did you not observe among Randolf's followers countenances, which you had seen before? In spite of their change of dress, I am certain, that the two who rode next to Gero were Friars, who often visited the Castle of Torrenburg."—

—"Alas!" answered Constantia, "it is not now, that I learn for the first time, that a perfect understanding subsists between these robbers and the unworthy members of some religious community. During my confinement in Gero's tent I frequently observed monks among

his visitors; of whose principles you will judge, when I inform you, that they made no scruple to counsel my encouraging the licentious addresses of my jailor, though they were thoroughly persuaded, that I was a dedicated Nun: they offered to release me from my vows, laughed at (what they termed) the absurdity of my prejudices, promised me entire absolution, and advised me to pay no more respect to my veil, than they did to their cowls and scapularies. Conceive, dear Ida, my sufferings, while compelled to listen to such profane suggestions, and to repress the indignation, which they excited in my bosom."—

—"And have you then no guess," demanded Ida, "what is the object of an union so singular?—Did they never

let fall a syllable, whence you could collect the nature of this mysterious enterprize, on which they are now departed?"—

Constantia declared her perfect ignorance on the subject.

—"Alas! alas!" resumed Ida, "dreadful apprehensions force themselves upon my mind! Randolf frequently suffered hints to escape him, which the more that I reflect on them, serve but to confirm my fears the more. The robbers have a private understanding with the false Hilarius.—The Monks, whom I discovered in Randolf's train, are of the same order with that betrayer! —Its true, Count Frederick has treated me cruelly and unjustly, and now little merits, that I should feel anxiety on his account. Yet, oh! that I were but

near

near him for one half hour, that I might warn him of the dangers, which hang over him and his, and which I would willingly avert, though the price were the last drop of my blood and the last breath of my existence."—

The Sisters had full leisure in the wild solitude to which they were conveyed, to communicate to each other their mutual fears and melancholy forebodings. Ida's insinuating manners soon rendered her a favourite with her grey-headed guards; and the persuasion of Constantia's religious vocation made them bow with superstitious reverence at her approach, and hold it an honour to be suffered to kiss the hem of her sanctified garment. In consequence of these prepossessions in their favour, the Sisters had no other reason to complain

of their treatment in confinement, except the confinement itself.

The place, in which they now resided, was inaccessible to all, except the robbers, and the rays of the sun. It was a flat spot surrounded by a chain of snow-covered mountains; one narrow foot-path hewn in the rock was the only entrance, whose windings were known to none except the ferocious inhabitants of this valley; and which the sudden descent of weights of snow and of ice-splinters* from the over-hanging rocks frequently rendered for some time impracticable even for them. The Sisters shuddered, as they gazed upon the gigantic masses of rocks of ice, which glittered coldly around them as far as the eye could reach; and they could not conceal their terrors at reflecting, that a single motion

* Avalanches.

motion of those cloud-covered summits would be sufficient to convert the valley into their inevitable grave. The chief of their guards, however, upon hearing them make this remark, assured them, that this never *would* happen, because it never *had* happened yet.

—"You must know, fair ladies," said he, "that I am one of the most antient among the heroes, who have the honour to serve under the banners of Sir Randolf of Mansfeld. While I was but a child, I fled hither with my poor father, then the innocent victim of monkish persecution, and we found a kind refuge in the bosom of these mountains. The man, who was then at the head of this hospitable community, had been acquainted with the first institutor of the band, and had learned

from

from him many remarkable particulars respecting this valley; some of them in good truth enough to curdle the young blood in your veins with very terror: but as to such an accident as that which you apprehend, never had such a thing been known to happen. Therefore set your hearts at rest, ladies: the valley lasted out *his* time; you see, it has almost lasted out *mine*, and I warrant you, it will last out yours also."—

The Sisters had no better means of passing the tedious hours of captivity than in listening to the old robber's never-ending narratives: besides, they thought it by no means impossible, that in the warmth of discourse some particulars might escape him, which might tend to the improvement of their own situation. They therefore often entreated

treated him to relate the adventures of his father, who had been so unjustly persecuted; as also to tell them, what he had learnt, from his first captain, respecting the original founder of this society of freebooters, and to give them some account of the various singularities of the mountains. They could not be better pleased to listen, than the old man was to talk; and he answered these inquiries at much greater length, than I shall repeat at present: with his persecuted father we have no occasion for concerning ourselves; and as to the wonders of the mountains, we are likely to obtain a more particular description of them from another quarter: the only point then, which need be repeated for the gratification of the curious, is the manner, in which the habitation of holy

Anchorets

Anchorets became converted into a retreat for banditti.

Whoever is acquainted with the antient history of Sargans, cannot but remember, that these private recesses of the mountains were inhabited by a society of fugitive Monks from Cloister Curwald. The institution of this society took place in the time of Count Ethelbert of Carlsheim; and it was continued by the occasional reception of new members, as often as death reduced the number, to which it had been limited by its founder, Abbot Christian. That number was six; but for want of novices it was reduced to two, at the period, when Luprian, the licentious Abbot of Cloister-Curwald, (flying from the vengeance of Count Herman of Werdenberg, and from the punishment

due

due to his inhuman treatment of the Lady Emmeline) was conducted by chance to this secluded Hermitage.

The pious Anchorets received him with the most benevolent welcome: they gave full credit to his tale of persecuted innocence, and looked upon the virtuous sufferer as an angel conducted thither by the hand of Heaven, that he might comfort and sustain them under the infirmities of age, and might close their eyes, when death should draw nigh their stony couches. This last piece of service Luprian lost no time in rendering them. He imagined, that they possest concealed treasures of immense value, which would enable him to lead once more a life of luxury in some foreign country, could he but obtain the inheritance of his hosts. In

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consequence of this persuasion, the old hermits slept in the grave sooner, than nature had intended; and Luprian without an hour's delay ransacked every corner of the cave. His expectations were cruelly disappointed. He found nothing more than the usual possessions of an Anchoret; cowls, scapularies, crosses, and a few relics of saints and martyrs. But of gold or jewels there appeared not the slightest vestige; and Luprian had the mortification to find, that he had committed one of the most horrible crimes ever perpetrated on earth, without deriving from it even the most insignificant advantage.

Yet was it not its guilt, which made him lament the commission of this action; no, 'twas its having been committed without reward. His con-

science

science was by no means of so delicate a texture, as to make him feel uncomfortable, while inhabiting the scene of this atrocious murder. On the contrary, he resolved on making this well-concealed retreat the theatre of fresh offences, and immediately employed himself in collecting a set of men, whose hearts were depraved, whose characters were blasted, and whose prospects in the world were ruined like his own. These he conducted to the mountain-valley, and became the founder of a band of free-booters, which had now existed above a hundred years, and which had brought inexpressible calamity on all the neighbouring country. The rich and the poor, the nobleman and the peasant, alike mourned over their ravaged fields, and plundered

dwellings, their murdered children and dishonoured wives; and yet did the authors of all this mischief set punishment at defiance, protected by their secret caverns and their snow-clad impracticable rocks.

Their numbers had gradually increased. Hither fled for refuge many a ruined nobleman, no longer able by honest means to supply his pampered appetites with those indulgencies, which habit had now made absolutely necessary: many a fugitive Monk, who dreaded the chastisement so justly due to his violated vows: many a blood-guilty culprit, to whom the world offered no happier prospect than the gibbet or the rack: and alas! many an innocent sufferer, driven by the persecution of the powerful or by the bann of the church to

this wild society, in whose polluted bosom he for the first time became acquainted with guilt. The numbers of these banditti now considerably exceeded a thousand, all of whom acknowledged as their chiefs Randolf and Gero.

Besides the above information, the old robber communicated to his fair questioner many particulars respecting the neighbouring mountains, every succeeding one of which was more wonderful and terrific than its predecessor. The Sisters believed no more of these extraordinary tales than they thought proper: however, they obtained much more credit with the one, than with the other. Ida's solitary wanderings through the subterraneous caverns of her uncle's castle had given her a degree

of confidence in danger, which before was totally wanting in her character: and the experience which she had thus acquired, in addition to her natural high spirits and enthusiastic imagination, converted her from being the most timid of created beings into a kind of demi-heroine, ready for adventures, and disposed to set all perils at defiance.

—"All things well considered," said she to her sister, as they sat one star-light night before the door of their cavern, round which their guards lay sleeping; "all things well considered, I am convinced, that flight is absolutely necessary, and by no means unlikely to be attended with success. Whether Randolf and Gero prosper in their plans, or fail, their return will equally bring with it our certain ruin. Then before

that dreaded return takes place, let us summon up our resolution, and seize the first favourable opportunity to explore the way through yonder chain of mountains, which old Hugo has described to us in such terrible colours. The way, by which I fled from the Castle of Sargans, was not without its horrors: yet I soon grew accustomed to them; and how far inferior were they to those, which I had heard attributed to the caverns, and which I believed to be real, till experience convinced me of my error! Oh, be assured, Constantia! we shall find, that a similar deception has been used in the present case. Yonder mountains, I am persuaded, are not entirely covered with ice and snow; between them may be found, no doubt, many a green and

shadowy

sheltered valley, where we may rest occasionally, and recover strength sufficient to endure and to conquer the dangers and difficulties of the way, which still remains to be traversed. Who knows, but their lofty heads conceal from us some happy smiling regions, where we may pass the rest of our lives unknown and unnoticed in innocence and peace, and may become once more as happy, as we were in the morning of our youth on the banks of the Lake of Thun and in the green vallies of Frutiger?—Dearest Constantia, be resolute, and let us hazard the attempt! For the worse, our situation cannot change: we can lose nothing, even should we fail; we may gain every thing, if we succeed: even at the worst, the attempt however unprosperous must obtain for

us *one* advantage, a release from captivity by death without dishonour."—

In answer to these representations, Constantia reminded her sister of the fearful traditions, which Hugo had related to them, respecting the mountains, and the fantastic beings supposed to inhabit them. She pointed to the Halsberg Rock, whose steep and lofty head rose exactly opposite to them, glittering through the gloom of night like an immense star; and she inquired of Ida, to what cause she attributed this extraordinary splendour? Was it by any means improbable (she asked) that these inaccessible heights were appropriated to the residence of evil spirits; who by night endured there the punishment due to their crimes in sulphureous fires, of which that light was

the reflection; and who by day employed themselves in leading astray such unwary travellers, as ventured too near the place of their mysterious torments, and in hurling them down frightful precipices into depths and abysses, never to rise again?

Ida replied, that it was by no means her intention to travel into the clouds so far as the place, whose dazzling brightness had induced her sister to people it with such terrific inhabitants: and she added, that being determined on flight, she was better pleased to believe, that the brightness itself, which seemed like a crown of diamonds encircling the brows of the venerable Halsburg and his brethren, proceeded merely from the reflection of the moon and stars on the ice-covered cliffs and crags,

than from brimstone and sulphur burning in a terrestrial Hell.

Constantia's long abode in a convent and her visionary turn of mind, made it difficult for Ida to get the better of these superstitious terrors: yet at length she succeeded. They began to make the necessary preparations for their attempt. They lost no opportunity of secreting such provisions, as were not of a very perishable nature and were easy of conveyance; they also endeavoured to accustom themselves to taking but little sustenance in the course of the day; and they soon flattered themselves, that whatever might otherwise be the dangers of their expedition, they were at least secure against suffering from the attacks of those two most cruel enemies of poor pilgrims, hunger and thirst.

As to pretences for absenting themselves from the valley, they were easily to be found. The robbers were too thoroughly persuaded, that flight was impossible, and too strongly imprest with the idea, that women were too great cowards to hazard such an attempt, for them to keep any very strict watch over their prisoners.

Constantia was particularly dexterous in laying springes for snipes, woodcocks, and other birds, which frequented these rocks in great numbers; and the light-footed Ida would often explore places in search of their eggs, where the chamois himself would scarcely have ventured to climb. Then when the Sisters were successful, they knew so well how to prepare their booty for the table in a manner the best calculated to

please the palate, that even old Hugo did not think it beneath him to accept a part of the savoury repast. Sometimes, the eagerness of this pursuit prevented the girls from perceiving the flight of time; and night was already closing in, before they regained the cavern. However, as they seldom returned with empty hands, and as they always did return at last, these long excursions were seldom found fault with.—One of the robbers indeed thought proper in a moment of ill-humour to remonstrate with Hugo on the too great liberty allowed the captives, and to represent the possibility of their seizing the opportunity to escape; but the old man was faithful also on this occasion to the opinion, which he had formerly given respecting the fall of

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the ice-crags; and continued to content himself with thinking,—"that which never had happened, in all probability never would happen at all;" indeed this was on all occasions a favourite maxim with him: and he frequently averred, that his adhering to it through life had saved his head many an unnecessary care, and his limbs many an unnecessary journey.

In the course of these excursions, the Sisters had examined the lower part of most of the mountains towards the north. They agreed, that a particular path, which seemed to lead straight over the Halsberg Rock, appeared to offer the most convenient passage and the greatest prospect of a successful end to their journey. By this path then they determined to set forward,

as soon as they could summon up resolution sufficient to enter upon so dangerous an undertaking; but this was no easy matter, and they still thought it better with every succeeding day to postpone their journey to the next.

In the mean while, it appeared that Gero and Randolf had not found their plans so easy of execution, as they had flattered themselves would have been the case. This was evident from their thinking it necessary to send for the greatest part of those of their associates, who had been appointed to watch over the captives and treasures concealed in the secret valley; and who, being chiefly men, whose strength was considerably impaired by age or wounds, could only be required to give assistance in some case of most urgent necessity. This

unexpected

unexpected demand for their services produced much disturbance among the grey-headed miscreants. The Sisters thought this a favourable opportunity for putting their design in execution. Their preparations were already completed: each took a basket well-filled with wine and provisions in her left hand, and grasped with her right a strong and knotted staff to support her tottering feet, as she traversed the slippery paths of the mountains: and then with hearts beating anxiously, and with cheeks, almost as pale as the snow-hills to which their steps were addrest, they set forward to pursue a path till then never trodden by the foot of mortal.

Each was persuaded, that she was thoroughly acquainted with the nature of these mountains, because they had

examined the two or three first miles of them. They dreamed of green vales and silvery fountains, because they had occasionally found such among the lower parts of the Halsberg Rock. But how bitter were their sensations, when they perceived, that with every moment the path became more rough and difficult; when they found, that their endeavours to keep on the same level were in vain, and that they were compelled to ascend into the more bleak and lofty regions of the mountain! at length they stopped in despair: they exchanged looks of terror, and murmured a few broken words, respecting the hopelessness of their attempt and the necessity of returning. They embraced each other with a sigh of anguish, and then began to retrace their

way to the robber's valley; for even this now appeared to them an object less terrible, than certain death in this kingdom of frost and desolation. However, they had not proceeded far, before they discovered, that (miserable as it was) even this last resource was denied to them. It was evident, that they had missed their way; to which ever side their course was directed, they still found themselves compelled to ascend. It seemed, as if they were inclosed in some magician's circle, from whence there was no escaping; or as if incensed at their invasion of his territories, the spirit of the mountain had so fascinated their eyes, that they could only see the paths which led upwards to his cloudy palace, but none which by descending into the vale would enable them to *escape from* his vengeance.

As yet they had not felt themselves quite solitary in these realms of terror. Sometimes a chamois bounded by them; sometimes their footsteps, echoing from the frozen rock, scared from its nest a screaming eagle: but still the further that they advanced, the more silent and awful seemed all around them; and the greater that the number became of those gigantic masses of ice, which they left behind, the greater number still were seen towering before them in the distance. Here all animation seemed to end: here the stillness of death appeared to have fixed its everlasting dwelling. No solitary weed, no single blade of grass showed itself from between the frozen rifts. Only here and there appeared some scanty patches of moss, and of another plant without colour, taste, or smell; thin, frail and white as

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the snow, from which it was produced.

Constantia paused for a moment: she prest her sister's hand, and silent tears streamed down her cheeks, while she pointed to a pair of milk-white butterflies; the only living creatures to be seen in this melancholy place, and perhaps the last, which *they* should ever see. It was clear, that not their own sport or inclination had brought the insects thither, but that some unlucky gust of wind had forced them into these inhospitable desarts. The poor little flutterers flew round each other for a while in still contracting-circles, and then sank on the ground, overpowered by the killing wind which blew from the Ice-hills. The Sisters gazed upon them with looks of compassionate

anguish; in the fate of these two unfortunate wanderers they read their own. Their feet were already seized by the frost; it would have been impossible for them to have proceeded much further, had not a better path presented itself before them. This, it is true, was free from ice and snow; but on the other hand it was much more difficult and rough, on account of immense masses of fallen rock, which occasionally barred up the path completely. Over these they were obliged to climb, not without danger; neither did they suffer themselves to be scared from proceeding by the precipices, which frequently yawned on both sides of them, and threatened the poor Pilgrims with death in their abysses. But oh! how amply were they repaid

for

for all which they had suffered in traversing this path, when they perceived some narrow planks laid from one of those precipices to another. Here then were certain proofs, that human beings had past this way before them; had performed the journey with success; and had left these memorials to assure any wanderers who might follow them, that it was not impossible for patience and perseverance to overcome the obstacles, which opposed their painful progress. Now then the Sisters hastened onwards with fresh spirits and recruited hopes. Alas! it was not long, before each separately perceived skulls, and other fragments of human skeletons, which told them but too plainly, how vain was the attempt of escaping from these rocks with life! each knew but too well

well the object which shocked her; each felt but too plainly the truth, which the sight of that object conveyed: but neither told what she had seen to the other, lest she should make her sister's bosom share the anguish of her own.

Thus did the poor weary girls continue to wander onwards, till day-light faded; the increasing gloom made the surrounding objects appear doubly terrific. At length the moon rose. Ida and Constantia were passionate admirers of the charms of nature: it is true, that their hearts were too full of anxiety, and their limbs too much tortured by the severity of the frost, to admit of their feeling in its whole strength of beauty the admirable scene, which the moon-beams now exhibited to their

view: yet was not that beauty entirely disregarded by them. Each called her sister's attention to the dazzling and indescribable splendour, which now unexpectedly surrounded them: each, in hopes of imparting a gleam of momentary satisfaction to the other, exaggerated her admiration at the pompous show, and forced an expression of pleasure into her countenance, which was totally foreign to her heart. The moon rose still higher; her image was reflected a thousand-fold from the enormous crystallizations, which presented themselves on all sides, hanging from the broken crags, and threatening every moment to fall into the profound gulphs beneath them. The objects around seemed on a sudden like some region described in romance, where

diamond-

diamond-rocks and palaces of precious stones are raised in an instant in a wild desart by the wand of some arch-magician: everything appeared enchanted, and the Sisters, as they now hastened onwards, seemed wandering in a flood of silver light: but alas! that light was cheerless and unwarming. It only enabled them to contemplate the regions of frost around them, but gave them no relief from the pain, which that frost inflicted! with a sentiment of sorrow not to be exprest, they folded each other in a strict embrace.

—"All around us is so bright and fair!" said Ida; "alas! and *we* are so wretched!"—

Constantia only answered her with tears —yet after remaining for a few moments in this attitude of tender sorrow, they

were

were sensible, that a kind of cheering warmth had communicated itself from each bosom to the other. Yet Constantia now declared, that she found it impossible for her to proceed onwards: but if any place could be found, not so totally frozen as to threaten any one, who should rest there, with the sleep of death, she trusted, that after a short repose she should be able to resume her journey with recruited strength and spirits. They had fancied for some time, that they could distinguish the distant murmur of a stream of water; and they now naturally concluded, that a place, where water was still unfettered enough to flow, could not be altogether destitute of warmth.

Ida encouraged her fainting sister to drag herself a few paces further, in hopes

hopes of discovering that place of rest, which she had just declared so necessary.

They ventured to enter one of the enormous caverns, which the penetrating moon-beams deprived of some part of its natural terrors. As they proceeded, they were sensible of a different temperature of air from that, which they breathed in the more exposed parts of the mountain: by comparison they could almost call the sensation, which they now experienced, by the pleasing name of warmth; and the feel of something like soft moss under their feet encouraged them with the conviction, that here at least all vegetation was not completely at an end. The roar of the water-fall by this time was almost deaf[illegible] but no persuasions could

could induce the timid Constantia to advance one step further into the cavern, than where it was illuminated by the moon-beams.

She sank almost insensible upon the mossy carpet; while the more active Ida bethought herself of every possible means of alleviating the sufferings of her fellow-Pilgrim. The contents of their baskets remained untouched, for anxiety of heart had prevented them hitherto from being sensible either of thirst, or hunger. Ida now bathed her sister's pale lips with some drops of wine: she then splintered the staves, which had guided their tottering steps in this hazardous journey; and she hastened to collect a few precious fragments of broken wood, which while entering the cavern she had remarked

in

in the moon-shine; probably they were the remains of a plank, which had served some former traveller as a bridge over the wide chasms between the rocks.

With a flint and the steel clasp of her girdle she contrived to strike out a few sparks of fire. It was not long, before she had the satisfaction to see the wood blazing; and she started in admiration and astonishment at the magnificent show, which the strengthening fire-light presented before her; the Sisters were at the entrance of an immense and vaulted cavern, whose sides and roof appeared to be entirely formed of ice: from the extreme end of it the rush of the water-fall proceeded and was repeated by innumerable echoes: while the flames played sometimes on large sheets of crystal, smooth, bright,

and

and polished as Venetian mirrors, and sometimes fell upon the broken crags of the rock, whence they were reflected in a thousand ways, and which they tinged with a thousand colours.

But this was not the time for amusing herself with unprofitable observation, and Ida soon recovered herself from her momentary enthusiasm. Constantia lay by the side of the little fire, still in great need of comfort and assistance; and it was long, before her sister's efforts to revive her produced the desired effect. The first favourable consequence of these endeavours was a gentle slumber, as she lay reclined upon the moss, which by this time, had acquired a slight degree of warmth; Ida seated herself close by the fire,

occupied in feeding and preserving it, and determined not to allow her eyes to close, in order that she might devote herself to watching the slumbers of her sister.

Yet the night appeared so long, that she would have found it impossible to resist her inclination to sleep, if she had not sought some more active employment. Accustomed by her adventures in the Donat-Fortress to long wanderings in caves and darkness, she resolved to beguile the tedious hours with exploring the more retired depths of the rock, and tracing to its source the water, whose distinct roar assured her, that it could be at no great distance. The kindly warmth of the fire had recruited her spirits and restored her

strength

strength in a great measure; and she found herself able to undertake the task of wandering through the frozen cavern, without being in danger of yeilding to the cold. Midnight was past, when guiding her course by the light of a blazing fire-brand she drew near the thunders of the cataract, and her limbs trembled less with cold, than with expectation of the sight which she was now on the point of witnessing. Who can penetrate without emotion into the earth's interior sanctuary? who can presume to pry into Nature's secret abodes, where the great Mother brings forth those children of her strength the mighty Floods, without feeling awe-struck by the bold and desperate undertaking?

The blazing fire-brand was here unnecessary. An opening in the cavern's roof gave free admittance to the moon-beams, and the whole extent was brilliantly illuminated. Ida now beheld a spectacle, to which she doubted whether the whole universe could produce a rival. From the summit of a rock of ice, whose height the eye measured with difficulty, and which was entirely formed of the river's own frozen evaporations, did the rapid torrent of the Aar precipitate the whole volume of its waters headlong, till it reached an enormous mass of broken pieces of rock, the probable accumulation of ages. Here it divided itself into more than twenty lesser rivers, which sought their passage into the vale below, in a variety of directions.

—The

—The scene was most splendid, but also was most awful!—the moon-light made the foaming flood appear like a torrent of liquid silver; which produced the most singular and fantastic effects, as it rushed with rebellowing roar among the groupes of colossal rocks around it, and interrupted with the glitter of its streams, the deep gloom occasioned by their shadows. Ida looked up to the awful height, whence the torrent descended, covering her with the light sprinkling of its foam: she looked down into the fearful gulph, in which its waters were buried: she looked upon the cavern's glittering walls, covered with incrustations of innumerable shapes and colours, and upon the moving shadows, which fell from the surround-

ing gigantic rocks. The sight was too much for her; she felt her head grow giddy; the fire-brand dropt from her grasp, and she sank upon the ground almost insensible.

She soon recovered herself, and hastened to quit a scene, whose awful beauties were more than she could bear in the weak and agitated state of her nerves. She could discern the glimmerings of the distant fire, and hastened back to the outward cavern; where she found Constantia still buried in repose. The flame was now getting low, and more fuel was not to be procured: but it had already warmed the cave sufficiently to remove any apprehension, lest the sleeper should be frozen. Since therefore her watching ceased to

be necessary, Ida no longer resisted the drowsiness, against which for some time past she had found it so difficult to contend. Besides, through the opening of their resting-place she could already discern the first faint reddening of the approaching morn; she therefore laid herself down by Constantia's side with the pleasing reflection, that the cave would soon be warmed and gladdened by the power of the sun; and that when her still-slumbering sister should open her eyes, she would not behold those gloomy appearances, which during that long sad night had produced upon herself such deep and melancholy impressions.

Ida had not long closed her weary

eye-lids, before Constantia awoke greatly refreshed. Unconscious of the manner in which her sister had past the night, she lost no time in waking her, and advising the prosecution of their journey. Ida was contented with her short repose, and obeyed the summons. Yet before they quitted the hospitable cavern, to whose shelter from the night-blast they undoubtedly were indebted for life, Ida led her sister to the place, which had appeared to her so awfully splendid when viewed at midnight; but which (she doubted not) would produce a different impression than in those moments, when her fortitude was completely subdued by anxiety of mind and lassitude of body.

The

The beams of the morning-sun now stained the waters of the Aar with crimson light: its streams, as they precipitated themselves into the vales beneath, glowed with a thousand beautiful colours. A shower of diamonds seemed to fall from the summit of the ice-rock, and the clifts, which during the night had thrown such deep and solemn shadows around them, now were gaily arrayed in verdant moss and covered with such hardy plants, as can endure cold without inconvenience, and which generally fasten their roots in the fissures of stones and among the broken crags of mountains. The sight was at once majestic and enlivening! the two pilgrims sank upon their knees opposite to the newly-

risen sun, and poured out the sentiments of pious enthusiasm, with which they felt their hearts overflow. Not complaints, not murmurs, not sighs proceeded from the lips of these poor forlorn-ones: no; they expresst their delight at this wonderful creation and their admiration of its Creator, though at that moment they were themselves struggling against calamities so desperate, as scarcely to afford them the remote possibility of a rescue. Never perhaps was a nobler sacrifice offered up by suffering humanity to the power and magnificence of the Supreme!

Yet Ida's sacrifice was the greatest, since Constantia possest a source of satisfaction in her bosom, of which her sister was not yet aware.

"To-day," said she, while her countenance was brightened with smiles, at the same time detaining Ida, who (having finished her orisons,) was on the point of turning from the cave; "to-day it is *my* turn to be the guide through our doubtful journey. Ida, I dreamt last night, that we were still wandering along the paths, which we traversed yesterday: methought, that you went foremost, and bewildered yourself in a narrow nook, where precipices on all sides impeded your further progress. I was lamenting over your distress; when lo! on a sudden St. Engeltruda stood before me, such as she is represented on the altar-piece in her Chapel at Engelberg. A ray of golden light detached itself from the aureol, which

blazed round her head, and guided me to a small opening in a rock, exactly resembling *that*, which caught my eye in the first moment of my entering this cavern. I past through it: a narrow winding way descended gradually into the valley. Suddenly, as if it had been by some magic spell, we were transported into those happy plains, where we past the years of infancy, and which I shall never cease to regret our ever leaving: there we became once more Mary and Rosanna Tell, and forgot in the humble tranquillity of Rutelis the sorrows and sufferings of our lofty hateful station."—

Ida gave way to the enthusiastic hopes of her sister, and followed her, as with difficulty she forced her way

rough a narrow opening, which she
d discovered at no great distance
om the torrent. After springing
idly at the hazard of their lives over
few wide-yawning chasms, they
ched a kind of green plain, where
was possible for them to proceed
ove a hundred yards without meeting
y obstacle. A circumstance so new
their painful journey inspired Con-
antia with added confidence. She
nced smiling to her sister, and pointed
two small white butterflies, who
ere sporting in the sunshine, and
hich (she was firmly persuaded) were
e very same, whom she had seen
lying exhausted to the ground on
e day before.

"Yesterday," said she with exul-
tation,

tation, "yesterday they were the emblems of our distress; to-day they are the prophets of our speedy rescue. See, see! a favourable western gale wafts them kindly to the lower vallies, where they may flutter through fields of flowers, and forget how much they suffered from the frost, while they bask in the bright and cheering sun-shine."—

Her long undisturbed night's rest, and her confidence in the protection of her Patron-Saint had greatly improved Constantia's spirits: Ida's on the contrary were much more depress than at the beginning of their journey. They soon reached the termination of their easy road; and as fresh obstacles seemed again to impede their progress with every step, Ida asserted, that the difficulties,

culties, which they found in their present path were sufficient to prove, that they had judged ill in altering their direction. It was in vain, that Constantia attempted to demonstrate, that the course, which she so much regretted, would have led them into the most remote recesses of the Grimsel-Mountain, which towered above them on the *one* side; or that she pointed out the Tempest-horn, which rose on the other like some threatening giant, and on whose ice-covered limbs no path was discernable, which could possibly have been trodden by any mortal feet.

A narrow passage between two almost joining rocks guided them to the mountain of Gemmi: and now they perceived with joy, that instead of being one unvaried acclivity, their road every

now

now and then suffered them to descend. Its true, this road seemed rather calculated for the clambering of goats, than for the use of human beings: but though it was frequently interrupted by extensive chasms, they frequently found themselves assisted in passing them by broad planks, already laid over them by some friendly hand. Where there were none, and the Sisters were obliged to traverse the abyss with extreme hazard on some narrow shelf by clinging to the broken crags, still Constantia never would proceed, till she had discovered either an unemployed plank, which she brought from some other place, or the shattered branch of some wild fig-tree; in order that she might stretch it across the chasm, and enable any future wanderer to cross it with less trouble and risque. She also

(as they proceeded onwards) began to relate a wonderful legend, which had been told her by one of the nuns of Zurich, explaining, why of all these mountains that of Gemmi alone was observed never to be whitened with snow or ice. But Ida was too much out of heart, and too fearful of their being engaged in a wrong direction, to permit herself to pay much attention to the legend; and as *she* did not think it worth notice, there can be no sort of occasion for my repeating it here.

From a rock, whose height made their heads giddy, they had ventured at mid-day to cast their eyes down into the regions beneath them, and which the sinking heart of Ida now made her despair of ever reaching. They could perceive from hence several dark spots,

which

which Ida pronounced to be abysses, in which their path would at length terminate: and this decision she delivered with such positiveness, that Constantia would undoubtedly have consented to return, or else have chosen a different path, had either a return been now practicable, or another path been to be found. But as the day advanced, and the road still continued to sink itself lower and lower, with what rapture did they ascertain, that these supposed abysses in fact were parts of a village; whose smoking chimnies announced to them the neigbourhood of domestic comforts, and to whose peaceable shelter the cattle were at that moment returning from pasture.

The quick-sighted Ida was the first to make this discovery. She sank weep-

ing

ing upon the bosom of her sister, and entreated her to forgive the wayward humour, with which she had embittered their journey. Constantia folded the suppliant to her heart, and the Sisters united in offering up a prayer of fervent gratitude to the Saint, who had guided their wanderings so wonderfully and so well.

They resumed their journey, and now how easy did it seem to them! As they descended, the path gradually enlarged itself; and before the shutting in of night they found themselves safe under one of the cottage-roofs, where they learned for the first time after a long, long interval, what it was to rest without anxiety: in truth the short and broken slumbers, which visited them in the robber-valley, were scarcely worthy

of

of being called by the sweet name of rest.

While the Damsels of Werdenberg were engaged in the above adventure; while one of them was anxiously and vainly expected at the Convent of Zurich, and while the other was most unjustly censured and despised for her supposed elopement with the acknowledged bridegroom of her friend; Count Henry of Montfort was eagerly pursuing the wrong track, into which he had been enticed by the perfidious chaplain of Castle-March. Persuaded that he should soon overtake Ida, he continued to rush forwards without allowing himself to rest for a moment; till in a little village belonging to the Canton of Glarus he was attacked by a severe fever, produced by the violence of his mental

agitation.

agitation, and by the inconsiderate speed, with which his journey had been performed. Nature at length yielded, and Henry was compelled to stop, and make his option either of recovering slowly, or of dying at once.

According to the established custom of all knight errants, he had commenced his expedition, not merely without forming a plan or consulting common sense, but without furnishing himself with a necessary supply of cash. He had left all his attendants far behind him; and as several days had elapsed since his separation from them, and as he had not thought proper to inform them of the object of his journey, they were totally unable to form even a guess as to the place, where it would be most

likely

likely for them to rejoin their master. Luckily for Henry, in the paroxysms of his fever he frequently pronounced the name of Montfort. From this the good simple people of the village (who in truth had rendered him all the assistance, which their sorry means could allow) concluded, that the invalid must certainly belong to the old Count of Montfort. A messenger was despatched to verify the fact: and Count Egbert lost no time in sending able physicians to his nephew's aid, by whose care the fever was at length vanquished. As soon as the step could be taken without endangering his life, the Convalescent was removed to his paternal mansion, where he saw nothing but frowning countenances, and heard nothing from morning till night, except reproaches

for

for his extraordinary conduct on his bridal day with Elizabeth. It seems, that Count Egbert now thought himself entitled to assume a higher tone of authority with his nephew, since the news was just arrived, that Henry's firm friend and powerful patron, the Emperor, was no more. He perished, in consequence of a malady which he contracted during an expedition against the Turks, and was no longer able to vindicate and enforce the claims of his favourite.

—"You cannot but acknowledge," said the old Count one day to his pale and still emaciated nephew, "that I have done every thing in my power to establish your happiness on a firm basis. Elizabeth of March, young, lovely, wise, power-

powerful, and (above all!) enormously rich, would have been your own at this moment, if you had not thought proper to abandon her for the laudable purpose of scampering away after a will-o'-the-wisp!—But now the business is over! No regrets can now put matters to rights again! Elizabeth is Countess of Torrenburg, is lost to you for ever, and what counsel to give you now, I protest, I know not!—Truly, your affairs are in a wretched condition: your claims on my succession cannot avail you till after my decease; and even then, they stand a fair chance of being worth but little, since I am now seriously thinking of contracting a matrimonial engagement: though you thought proper to break off my former

match

match by running away with my intended bride, the light and wanton Ida!"—

Here Henry assured him for the twentieth time, that he had not beheld Ida since the bridal day at the Castle of March; and his uncle for the twentieth time replied, by assuring Henry, that in that case it was very extraordinary, that nobody else should know any thing at all about her. However, whether she had gone off with Henry or with any other person, for his own part he was determined, that anxiety about her should never turn one more hair of his head grey; but that he would marry the first woman of a decent family, whom luck or accident should throw into his way.

In the course of his reproaches the old Count had mentioned Elizabeth's

marriage: this was a fact. Within a few days after Ida's disappearance, Elizabeth became Countess of Torrenburg. It has already been mentioned, that Count Frederick set forward for the Castle of March, in all the pomp of a bridegroom, to renew his addresses, fortified by an encouraging vision of his patron-saint, and assisted by the prayers of the worthy Father Hilarius. On the other hand, the house-priest of March had managed to screw the indignation of Elizabeth and her relations to the highest pitch against the fugitive Montfort and the Heiresses of Sargans; and the lady's parents were proportionably penitent for the ill-judged rejection of Count Frederick's addresses. Finding his mistress and her friends in a temper of mind so favourable to his wishes,

the

the superannuated lover needed only to make his proposals, in order to have them accepted. But little discussion was necessary; all parties were soon of the same mind, and Elizabeth in a few days entered the Castle of Torrenburg as its mistress. From that hour her every word, her every action was such, as proved her to be worthy of the high station, in which she was placed by the choice of this excellent nobleman; against whom no possible objection could be suggested, except that he was old enough to be the grand-father of his blooming wife. But to Elizabeth's disappointed heart his age was rather a recommendation than an objection. After Montfort's perfidy she felt it impossible for her ever to love another

man as her husband; but she loved Count Frederick as her father; she esteemed and reverenced him, nor from her conduct towards him would any one have supposed, that her happy husband was not still in possession of all the advantages and charms of youth. All affection for the ungrateful Henry seemed extinguished in her bosom, and the good old Count enjoyed with her a much greater share of happiness, than he had any reason to expect would have been the case. Nor was her behaviour towards her husband alone praiseworthy: she conducted herself on all occasions with so much discretion, and displayed throughout such winning graces and enlarged benevolence, that she became the object of universal

respect,

respect, and was proposed as a model to be admired and imitated by all the daughters of Helvetia.

In one point alone her prudence was in default. There was an individual in the Castle of Torrenburg, whose influence with her husband was omnipotent; but for whom she felt an aversion so insurmountable, that scarcely could she endure him in her presence; and whom she was rash enough to endeavour at removing, before she had examined whether her strength was equal to the undertaking, and whether this offence offered to the antient household gods, might not draw down some heavy punishment upon her own unsuspecting head.

This detested and persecuted object of Elizabeth's efforts was no other, than

the keeper of all the consciences in the Castle of Torrenburg, was no other than the devout Father Hilarius! She was not aware, that it was to him and his saints, that she was chiefly indebted for the illustrious title which she bore, and the splendid station which she occupied. Perhaps, even had she been conscious of her obligation, she would have but little approved of the crooked paths, by which the Friar had contrived to conduct her to her elevated situation.

In fulfilment of his vow, Count Frederick had recompensed the patron-saints of his two clerical allies most liberally for the possession of his adored Elizabeth. The chaplain of Castle-March (whose only capital fault was avarice) was well contented with the reward of

his

his exertions: not so was Hilarius! He had formed far greater plans, and indulged more glorious expectations. He had made no sort of doubt, that he should gain no less a share of the wife's confidence, than he already possest of the husband's. Instead of this, he obtained from her nothing but aversion and contempt; and from the moment of his being convinced, that such were her sentiments towards him, fury took entire possession of his misanthropic heart, and he brooded day and night over plans of swift-coming vengeance.

His disappointment in the present was greatly embittered by his foreseeing the failure of all those hopes, which he had long grounded upon the future. Much time had not elapsed since his marriage, when the superannuated Frederick com-

municated to the chaplain in confidence certain dispositions of his estates after his death, which could not fail to be highly disagreeable to the avaricious Monk. Every day more fascinated by the perfections of his beautiful wife, the Count tortured himself to discover some means, by which he might express in the most striking manner his gratitude to her, whose attentions shed a gleam of such bright sunshine over the evening of his closing life. He secretly bequeathed to her every thing, which it was possible for him to give, without entirely laying aside all justice to the young Countesses of Werdenberg: since much as he held himself insulted by their late conduct, still he was too generous to deprive them of any thing, to which the name which they bore could

enable them to advance the claims of justice.

His confessor was initiated into all these mysteries. Scarcely while he listened to them, could Hilarius restrain his rage within the bounds of decency. He saw all the fond hopes, which he had built upon Frederick's want of heirs and attachment to the church and its servants, destroyed at one blow; and he gnashed his teeth for spite to think, that it was out of his power to prevent the Count's benevolent intentions towards his wife from being carried into immediate and complete effect.

As for Elizabeth, she was entirely ignorant of those weighty proofs of his affection, which Count Frederick designed for her after his decease. She was equally ignorant of the spite and envy,

which this large bequest had excited against her in one of the most malignant of human hearts. She continued to proceed in her straight-forward benevolent course without turning to the right or to the left: she treated her decrepit husband with unabated kindness and attention unwearied; and she denied herself no opportunity of convincing Hilarius, that he was the object of her fixed aversion, and that she was decidedly bent on procuring sooner or later his expulsion from the Castle of Torrenburg.

Oh! that she had carried that design into execution before one of the basest attempts, that ever was plotted by a villain's brain, was ripe enough for action! Yet perhaps the will of Heaven ordained, that this plan should be suffered to ripen, in order that it might effect

the overthrow of its guilty author, and exhibit the merits of the noble lady of the Castle in the fullest blaze of all their purity and lustre!

Oh! generous Elizabeth! you for whom I write, and for whom I trust, that I have not written in vain! Is it permitted me to relate your own glorious actions to yourself? Yet why do I hesitate?—She, who (I doubt not) while perusing these leaves has not hesitated to bestow many a tear of compassion on the undeserved sorrows, many a tribute of admiration on the heroic patience, many an expression of delight and gratitude at the fortunate escape, of those whom she calls—"*her enemies*," —surely *she* need not avert her eyes, while my faithful hand places her before the glass, in which she may behold the

reflection of her own excellence! She knows well, that I am no flatterer. I have not concealed from her, that she is proud, rash, not disinclined to resentment for injuries, and obstinate in adhering to her determinations, however inconsiderately those determinations may have been formed. But neither will I conceal, that I know her to be generous, benevolent, courageous, resolute, disinterested; an avowed enemy of vice, however fascinating be the shape which it assumes; an enthusiastic adorer of virtue, however humble be the station which it occupies, however lowly be the habit which it wears. Such is the faint portrait of her, whom future historians will paint in far more brilliant colours; such is the portrait of Elizabeth of Torrenburg!

Hilarius had long been secretly connected with a society of mountaineers, who (by means of the private entrance to the Donat-Fortress) might be reckoned the Count's nearest neighbours. The precise nature of this union between the Monk and the Banditti belongs to the secret history of these miscreants, in which we are not sufficiently well instructed to authorize our giving any account of it in these memoirs. Let it suffice, that the union was a very close one; perhaps, it was a long-established custom for the robbers to connect themselves with some ecclesiastic, in memory of the original founder of their society, the celebrated Abbot Luprian. Alas! it is a very painful task for me, myself an ecclesiastic, the successor of that Abbot Luprian, the cotemporary of this

Monk

Monk Hilarius, to point out the stains, with which the vices of individuals have polluted the sacred habit!—Yet it is essential, that the whole truth should be laid before Elizabeth's eyes, and I will not hesitate to perform my duty to the full.

The avarice of Hilarius was insatiable. The custody of that deserted quarter of the Count's residence, which was now only known by the name of the Donat-Fortress, was intrusted to him; nothing could be more convenient for the robbers than such a retreat, where they could either take refuge, when the pursuit after them was too hot to admit of their venturing back to their valley; or where they could remain concealed and unsuspected of being in the neighbourhood, till the precise moment should arrive

arrive for executing their plans of devastation with the most complete success. Accordingly, no sum appeared to them to counterbalance the value of such a refuge; and Hilarius annually received an immense tribute for allowing them the use of the subterraneous passage, and also of such of the apartments of the Donat-Fortress, as were best adapted to their purposes and profession. Here they had a well-appointed armoury; here they deposited their prey, till circumstances admitted of its removal to the valley; and here (among many other precautions for their safety) they had not neglected to lay in a large stock of provisions, and above all several hogsheads of the best old Rhenish wine.

But

But though they did not neglect any occasion of increasing their wealth by the plunder of passengers and of the country at large, still there was one vast undertaking, which lay most at the hearts of *the Warriors of the Mountains*; for that was the title, by which the free-booters preferred being distinguished.—Of this undertaking Hilarius was the original suggestor, and without his aid they were well aware, that it never could be carried into execution. The object of it was nothing less, than to put the Warriors of the Mountains in possession of the whole domains of the Count of Torrenburg, with the exception of such parts as his pious enthusiasm should have induced him to bequeath to the Convent, of which Hilarius was a worthy member.

The

The plans were so well arranged, that nothing could seem more improbable than a failure: nothing indeed prevented their having been already carried into execution except the immoderate price, which Hilarius demanded in recompense of his services.

Matters, however, were so nearly concluded between the contracting parties, that Hilarius had occasionally introduced some of the principal robbers into the Castle in various disguises, in order that they might become thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the place, which they were to attack; might spy out the weaker parts of its defences; and by being aware of the obstacles to their designs, might be prepared to overcome them. Confiding in the terrific tales respecting the ghosts, which

haunted

haunted it, he had even ventured frequently to give his allies midnight entertainments in the deserted chambers of the Donat-Fortress. The superstitious domestics shook with terror, as they saw gleams of light streaming through the worm-eaten casements, and doubted not, that the ghosts of the antient tyrants of Carlsheim and Sargans had invited all the other infernal spirits to a feast in their former earthly residence. In this manner had the Count's enemies frequently been within a few hundred yards of him unsuspected; while he (good man) was dreaming, that his barred portals and lifted drawbridge secured him against any possible attack.

Yet his good fortune so ordained it, that the striking this important blow,

ras still delayed from time to time: Hilarius too was of opinion, that the ttest time for making the long-medi-ıted attack would be immediately after ıe Count's decease, when the want of neal heirs must necessarily produce ıuch confusion among the numerous aimants, and when in all probability the astle's inhabitants would be found ıtirely off their guard. The impatient)bbers were by no means satisfied with is opinion: they were for making the :tempt immediately; but unless they)uld convince Hilarius, their opposition ailed them nothing. He consented) their taking possession of the Donat-ortress; but he took care to keep it ell locked and bolted, so that the ıpposed spectres could not by any ıeans invade the inhabited part of the

Castle,

Castle, till it should be his own good will and pleasure to admit them.

It was at this period, that the Countesses of Werdenberg were acknowledged by Count Frederick, and were immediately considered by the Monk as obstacles to his designs. Looking upon Constantia as destined to the veil, his whole undivided hatred was monopolized by Ida; and he never rested, till he had ruined her in her uncle's good opinion, nay (by means of her mysterious flight) in the good opinion of the world. I have already related, in what manner he delivered her into the power of the robbers; who gratified him doubly, first by relieving him from a person whose absence he wished, and whose blood he was not quite villain enough to shed with his own hands.

hands, and secondly by rewarding him for the possession of so lovely a girl with a considerable sum of money.

As to what became afterwards of the unhappy Ida, that was a matter of little interest to Father Hilarius: but it would have been a matter of very *great* interest, if he had guest Randolf's intention of giving himself a legal claim to the inheritance of Sargans by the possession of her hand, and of reinstating the detested Ida hereafter in those rights, of which the Monk had taken so much trouble to deprive her.

The daily presents, which Frederick's generosity bestowed on his spiritual guide, made the latter by no means anxious to see the moment of his patron's dissolution. He had forwarded

to the utmost of his power Elizabeth's marriage, not only on account of the advantages promised both to himself and his Convent by the superannuated lover, whenever this union should be accomplished, but also from being persuaded, that the affectionate care of such a wife would be giving the Count a new lease for many years of existence.

But when the Monk perceived Elizabeth's decided aversion to himself, and that her remonstrances had already produced a degree of coolness in her husband towards both his person and his counsels, he found it necessary to hasten the execution of his plans. The venom of spite and vengeance, which had so long been working in his heart, at length overflowed; the glimmering sparks of treason broke into flames;

his intercourse with the Warriors of the Mountain grew more close than ever; and the peaceable inhabitants of the Castle were almost terrified out of their senses at the frequent feasts given by the ghosts of the antient Lords of Sargans.

The reports relative to the goblins of the Donat-Fortress at length reached Elizabeth. She had the rashness on one of these terrific nights, when all the other inmates of the Castle went about obstinately with their eyes and ears shut, as obstinately to keep hers wide open. Unattended, she ventured to approach the deserted chambers; and the sounds which reached her, as she stood without, convinced her, that if they really proceeded from spirits, those spirits must needs have retained a considerable

siderable portion of their former earthly habits.

Not the most distant suspicion of what really was the occasion of this uproar, was likely to suggest itself to her mind. She only concluded, and very naturally, that the belief in apparitions served some of her domestics as a cloak to hide their midnight and dissolute entertainments from the knowledge of their superiors. This was a practice, to which as mistress of the family she thought it absolutely necessary to put an immediate stop. Accordingly, without loss of time she informed her husband of what she had observed, and of what she supposed to be the fact: the household was immediately summoned, and ordered to attend their Lord and Lady to the

haunted

haunted chambers, which they were determined to examine without a moment's delay.

But the uninvited guests were already aware of their approach. One of Elizabeth's women was in the confidence of the Monk, and hastened to warn him by a signal previously agreed upon, that danger was at hand. Hilarius immediately insisted, that the lights should be extinguished, and that the Banditti should retire with all speed through the secret passage, which (he asserted) would be the most spirit-like way of taking their departure. But the robbers, who were heated with wine, declared, that it was high time for them to lay aside the characters of spirits, and that they never should find a more prosperous moment for making their long-

meditated attack, than the present. The continual postponement of this attack had long made them suspect their ally of playing them false, and they had prepared themselves for taking the power out of his hands with the very first favourable opportunity—the caverns below were filled with Banditti: those who were in the fortress were no inconsiderable number; and confident of a fresh supply of troops if necessary, they rushed forwards to meet the Lord of the Castle, without deigning to summon to their assistance their friends in the cavern. Indeed, they looked upon victory not only as certain, but easy, when their only antagonists were terrified domestics, headed by no better generals than an inexperienced female, and a gray-headed man just

escaped

escaped from the bed of sickness, and weighed down by the number of his years. Accordingly, without listening to the Monk's remonstrances, they rushed towards the great portal; and Elizabeth with her followers no sooner entered the court, in which the Donat-Fortress was situated, than to their utter surprize they found themselves attacked on all sides.

How lively were the colours, in which the enraptured Frederick described to me this the most glorious transaction of Elizabeth's life!—with what enthusiasm did *he* relate, with what enthusiasm did *I* hear, how in this moment of consternation Elizabeth alone preserved her presence of mind and the look of undaunted resolution; how, when her terrified attendants re-

coiled at the approach of the supposed spectres, she showed them the sword, which gleamed in the weak hands of their aged master, urged them to defend a life so precious, and shamed them by reproaches into following his example; how she wrested from the hand of a beardless robber the weapon, which he already pointed against her husband's heart, and instantly buried it in the assassin's own; how when the weak old Frederick was at length struck to the earth, she threw herself before him, and made her breast his shield; and how while occupied in this generous office, and while thus devoting her own life in order to preserve his, she received a wound upon her brow, whose scar now forms the noblest ornament of the most lovely face in all Helvetia!

Frederick was wounded, and his attendants conveyed him away from the scene of action; but Elizabeth still maintained her post, directing by her advice, and invigorating by her presence the small but faithful body of her retainers. The Banditti found by this time, that victory was not to be so easily gained, as they had hitherto expected; and they thought it prudent to summon to their assistance the lurkers in the subterraneous caverns. Elizabeth perceived, that the numbers of the assailants was suddenly and alarmingly increased. Every moment seemed to add to their strength, and it was evident, that unless some means of preventing the foe from profiting by this new accession of power could be *discovered*, every thing was lost.

Fortunately, in this critical moment the eye of the Heroine rested upon the portcullis, which on account both of its weight and workmanship was esteemed a master-piece of art. She sprang forwards; she still grasped the sword, of which she had deprived the robber, and with a single blow she severed the sustaining cord. It fell with a heavy crash, and destroyed in its descent several of the new-comers, who were over-hasty in flying to the assistance of their hardly-pressed companions.

—"Courage, my friends!" exclaimed Elizabeth with a sudden burst of joy; "resist your enemies but for a few minutes longer, and we are safe! hark, how the alarm-bells make the air resound! and see! the castle-portals are

thrown

thrown open! rejoice! rejoice! our preservers are at hand!"—

It had been one of the Countess's first orders, that the alarm-bells should be sounded without delay, and as soon as any signs were observed of obedience to the signal for assistance, that the Warder should set wide the gates for the reception of those, who might hasten to their relief. She was obeyed; but no one expected, that these precautions would bring them any more powerful succour than the presence of a few bands of peasants, armed in haste, and unaccustomed to such midnight attacks; or else perhaps the troops of some of the neighbouring noblemen, but who were all at too great a distance to admit of their reaching the Castle of Torrenburg, before the business *should have* been finally decided.

But Elizabeth, when she gave these orders, was better aware of their importance. The terrible event, which I have just been describing, took place on the night preceding St. Martin's festival. St. Martin's day was also the birth-day of the Count of Torrenburg; a day, which Elizabeth now celebrated for the first time, since she became a wife, and which she was determined to distinguish by a most splendid entertainment. For many weeks had her messengers been employed in traversing the neighbouring provinces, for the purpose of inviting the most distinguished noblemen and their families to be present at a tournament, to be held at the Castle of Torrenburg in honour of the nativity of its Lord. Count Frederick, though he was now too much enfeebled by age to admit of his

taking a part in them himself, still delighted in witnessing such martial sports: they recalled to him many a pleasing and many a glorious occurrence of his honourable life; and Elizabeth had not failed to select for his amusement on his birth-day that particular species, which, her own observation and the experience of others had given her reason to know, would be most acceptable to her husband.

It was on this very night, that the invited guests were expected at the Castle, accompanied by their wives and daughters with a numerous retinue. It had been settled, that they should not arrive till after midnight, in order that their being in the Castle might continue unknown to the Count till the next morning; when it was Eliza-

beth's design to conduct him (still ignorant of what was going to take place) to the prepared lists, where he would unexpectedly find himself seated in the circle of his best friends and well-wishers, in order to witness that kind of entertainment, in which he most peculiarly delighted. All her preparations had been made with the greatest secrecy; none but a few of her most immediate friends and domestics were in her confidence; and therefore few except herself were aware, that the alarm-bells were sounded for the purpose of calling to her assistance those expected guests, who (she was certain from the lateness of the hour) must needs be at no great distance.

Her hopes were soon verified. The draw-bridge had scarcely fallen, when

it re-echoed under the hasty trampling of horses'-hoofs. The court-yard was soon filled with soldiers, who without staying to demand what was the matter, hastened with drawn swords to assist the Countess and her faithful supporters. Elizabeth was a heroine in the moment of need; but her heart was still that of a weak and tender female. She was anxious to rejoin her bleeding husband; her wound was painful; and still more painful to her feelings was the sight of the blood, which streamed around her, and of the mangled corses with which the pavement was strewed. Most joyful was she, when she found herself at liberty to resign her dangerous and hateful post; her friend of youth, Richard of Ulmenhorst, and Count Oswald of March (her brother)

took the command of her forces; and she now flew to the chamber of that husband, who but a few minutes before had been indebted to her for his life. She found, that his wound (it was but a slight one) was already drest; and that he was earnestly insisting, that his attendants should lead him to rejoin his glorious wife, and suffer him either to conquer by her side, or perish with that dear one: they sank into each other's arms, and melted into tears of joy at finding themselves once more in safety. Seldom have youthful lovers, even in their happiest moments, felt such unmixed pleasure, as was now felt by Elizabeth, while she clasped the decrepit Frederick to her heart.

Before day-break the victory was complete. The knights, who had been

invited to a mock-fight, and had found one so serious, did not leave their work only half finished—the portcullis was raised again; every corner of the Donat-Fortress was investigated: the entrance to the subterraneous vaults was found open and unguarded, and these also underwent an examination. Here a considerable number of the free-booters were discovered, and after an obstinate resistance slaughtered; but a few of them found means to effect their escape from the caverns, and carried the news of this disaster to their associates in the valley of Halsberg.

Gero was one of the first, who fell in the assault; Randolf was taken prisoner: as to the author of all this mischief, the infamous Hilarius, he was found to all appearance lifeless in one

of

of the caverns, whither he had retreated during the heat of the combat. He had suffered so severely both in the conflict, and from the pressure of those, who (like himself) crouded to take refuge in the secret vaults, that though life was not quite extinct in him, he expired, before he had time to acknowledge his numerous transgressions, and receive their absolution. My knowledge of his private transactions and views was gleaned from the writings, which were afterwards found in his chamber, and in his cell at the Convent, of which he was so unworthy a member. These papers were confided to me by the Bishop of Coira; and their contents were such as rendered them highly improper to meet the eyes of the laity, who are already but too apt to

scoff, when a church-man slips, and from whom the servants of Religion ought carefully to veil the errors of her unsteady children.—But the love of truth, the interests of justice, and the welfare of two poor persecuted creatures, made it necessary for me to place everything in the clearest light before the eyes of her, who (I am certain) needs only to be convinced, that they are *really* persecuted, in order to become their most strenuous defender.

So entirely had their evil star the ascendant, that even this overthrow of their enemies only served to make the Sisters appear in the eyes of the world in a still more odious point of view. Hilarius died without having time to acknowledge the pains, which he had taken to effect Ida's ruin: it was not till

lately,

lately, that I obtained the certainty of the Monk's perfidy, and of the innocence of my poor wards; facts appeared so strong against her, that even I for a considerable time was compelled to give up the fruitless office of defending her; and the proofs, which spoke so loudly in her disfavour, seemed to increase in number with every fresh occurrence. Several of the robbers had been made prisoners, and underwent a close examination respecting the authors of their enterprize and its object. Among other things, they confest, that a damsel, understood to be a Countess of Werdenberg, had made a long abode in their society; that she was evidently the object of their captain's affection; and that it was reported among the Banditti, that she had consented to

become

become his wife, on condition of his establishing her claims to the domains of Sargans and Carlsheim by force of arms. Randolf, being questioned respecting these assertions, in a great measure confirmed them; he only denied, that Ida had ever given her consent in express words to the enterprize; but he profest his firm belief, that on those conditions he had every reason to believe her disposed to unite her fate with his. He had dropped such plain hints of his designs against the Count, that she could not possibly have misunderstood him, though her discretion made her prefer the appearing ignorant of a scheme, whose object was the ruin of her former benefactor: but as she must have gathered his intention *from various* circumstances, and as she

continued to treat him, not merely with unabated, but even with increased complaisance, he had certainly good reason to suppose, that his meditated plan was by no means disagreeable to her.—Alas! poor Ida! had she dared to abate that complaisance, and to express the sentiments of abhorrence, with which the robber's views inspired her, what would have been her reward?—ill usage; death perhaps; or what would have been still worse, life with the loss of honour!

But these reflections did not occur to Randolf or his hearers; they believed his arguments to be well founded, and that Ida had approved of the design, which had so nearly terminated her benefactor's existence. That she had been privy to it, is true: she had not misunderstood

derstood Randolf's hints, though was not aware of the exact nature is intentions; but no sooner was in safety, than her first object was provide for that of the Count of renburg.

he village, which at length afforded n security and rest, was called Edel-hen: here they were compelled to the night and the succeeding morn-; in order to recover from the gues of their late painful journey; it was from hence, that a messenger s dispatched to the Castle of Torren-rg with a letter, written by Con-ntia in a disguised hand and without gnature. Ida, who still trembled at thoughts of being either compelled give her hand to the old Count of *ntfort, or to* seclude herself for life

within

within the dreary walls of a cloister, was unwilling to let her incensed uncle know, where she might be found; and Constantia, though she had herself no motive for concealment, was afraid of being the means of discovering her sister. With much difficulty, and after many unsuccessful attempts, the following lines were at length completed, and a peasant was dispatched with them to the Castle of Torrenburg.

Count of Torrenburg!

Peruse these lines from an unknown but sincere friend, who trembles, lest the warning should come too late. In your domestic priest, the worthless Hilarius, you nourish a traitor, whose plans if successful will terminate in your destruction. He has already driven many innocent persons into the jaws of ruin: and now to finish his career with a master stroke of villainy, he meditates the overthrow of his generous benefactor. Secure him, and let him and his papers undergo a strict examination. Above all, set a watch over the Donat-Fortress, and let the private entrance

be

be carefully closed up, which you will find on the left hand of the window in the large chamber, which terminates the southern wing of the ruins. That entrance communicates with a subterraneous passage, well known to the robbers, who have so long been the terror of Helvetia, and with whom Hilarius carries on the most intimate correspondence. Hasten then to prevent their making any ill use of their knowledge of this communication; and if this warning should be in time to save you from danger, the writers of this letter will thank Heaven as for a benefit conferred upon themselves.

This well-meant epistle did not reach the Castle of Torrenburg till several days after St. Martin's day. It was read aloud at the Count's table, when the hall was almost filled with knights and ladies, who were assembled there on account of the festivities, with which Elizabeth thought it right to celebrate her Lord's escape from the perilous Banditti. The letter, while reading, was frequently interrupted by loud bursts of scornful laughter and expressions of derision from the whole assembly; yet 'tis said, that Frederick and Elizabeth did not laugh, and were quite silent. It was

easily

easily guest, from whom this unavailing warning came; and Count Oswald of March, (whose family pride had been stung to the quick by young Montfort's conduct on the bridal day, and whose affection for his sister made him the inveterate enemy of any-one, who offered her any injury or unkindness) insisted upon being allowed to answer the letter.

According to her instructions, Ida's messenger had no sooner delivered the letter, than he hastened away from the Castle: but two horsemen were dispatched after him in all haste, and the peasant was compelled to return for an answer. That answer pained the Sisters to the very heart; they preserved it carefully; they read it over and over again, and every time with fresh pain;

and

and they at length showed it to me, as a proof of their total renunciation by their uncle. Count Oswald had written as follows.

THE fair Ida's well-conceived letter arrived at the very time, which she intended; that is, when it was too late to be of any use. First to invent schemes of treachery, and then when they fail, to assume the part of a warning friend against those very schemes, was certainly one of the most dexterous artifices, that ever was produced by female ingenuity! Unfortunately, there are some people, who are not deceived even by artifices so dexterous, The Count of Torrenburg has been rescued from the Banditti, not by the fair Ida's warning *after* the event had taken place, but by the courage and affection of an angel,

whose

whose name was once Elizabeth of March; whose name would have been Elizabeth of Montfort, had it not been for the fair Ida's coquetry; and whose name is now Elizabeth of Torrenburg, in spite of all the pains, which the fair Ida gave herself to prevent her ever bearing that illustrious title. Yes! Elizabeth is Countess of Torrenburg: I protest, I cannot but pity the poor damsel Ida for so severe a disappointment, as this union must give to her views upon Count Frederick's inheritance. Besides the loss of her benefactor's good opinion, she has also to regret that of her lover the robber Randolf, who inhabits one of the Count's dungeons; so that all her hopes in that quarter are completely annihilated. It seems too, that she has not even contrived to secure the light and

worthless heart of Henry of Montfort, who (probably grown already weary of her) has returned to his uncle's residence; as report says, a sincere penitent for having suffered himself to lose such a treasure as the hand and heart of Elizabeth through the artifices of a perfidious coquette. Probably by this time the fair Ida has found out, that this maxim contains more truth than she supposed; viz. "that crooked paths lead to precipices."

Randolf, the fair Ida's lover, is a prisoner; Henry of Montfort, the fair Ida's dupe, has recovered his senses; Gero and Hilarius, the fair Ida's friends, are both dead; and Count Frederick, the fair Ida's intended victim, is aware, that Hilarius is not the only snake, whom he has warmed in his bosom.

Count

Count Frederick of Torrenburg sends the fair Ida his best wishes for her speedy repentance, and ventures to suggest, that a convent will be in future her fittest residence.—He begs however, that this may only be considered as his *advice;* since looking upon her no longer as his relation, he has no longer any right to give her a command. At all events, he begs, that whether she takes that advice or not, she will not think it necessary to inform him of her proceedings, since he has now but one wish on earth respecting her; to hear of her no more!

IDA's tears streamed plentifully, while she read these cutting lines. She gave the letter in silence to Constantia, who felt the unmerited reproaches no less acutely than her sister. A long pause ensued, which at length was broken by Constantia.

—"There is no mention made of *me!*" said she;—"no more, than if I were no longer in existence!—Well! well! it is better to be quite forgotten, than to be so remembered!"—

—"How could they guess," exclaimed Ida, "that *I* was the writer of that letter?—a letter, which He, who sees the heart, can witness for me, I

wrote

wrote out of pure good will to my unkind uncle."—

—"And how strange," rejoined Constantia, "that they should misunderstand your character so completely, as to believe you capable of such perfidy! And how cruel of them to insult your misfortunes by such an unfeeling taunting letter!"—

With such inquiries did they torture themselves during a whole tedious day; and they endeavoured in vain to discover, what part of Ida's conduct could have authorised a man, who had once shown her so much benevolence, to view her on a sudden in a light so perfectly odious. It appeared too from this letter, that Count Frederick's ill opinion of her was also the opinion of the *world;* and what had she done to

deserve this universal ill opinion?—The Sisters were not aware, that a prejudice once conceived gains strength with every minute, and presses into its services the most insignificant occurrences: till the supposed offence from a molehill is swelled into a mountain, and shade added to shade gradually makes the detested object appear in colours sufficiently black, to *justify* its being made the object of detestation.

No mention had been made of Constantia in Count Oswald's letter, because on the one hand her gentle inoffensive manners had prevented her having any enemies; and on the other hand, her supposed participation in her sister's plans prevented the parties concerned from being her friends.—It appeared, that after quitting the Castle

of

of March on the memorable day of Elizabeth's intended wedding she had not thought proper to return to her convent. She had been way-laid by those robbers, who (as it was now believed) were at that very time in confederacy with her sister. No one doubted, that the free-booters had acted under Ida's directions, and with Constantia's concurrence; that the latter was totally under the influence of the former; and that if the one sister was not quite so deserving of censure as the other, she was at least equally unworthy of protection. It was concluded, that she was at that moment Ida's companion; and it was agreed by all, that the most proper mode of treating her, was not to bestow on her even the slightest notice.

When the bitterness of the first shock was over, the Sisters found, that they had no reason to consider their situation as at all altered for the worse by the perusal of this insulting letter. It had not been in their contemplation to effect a reconciliation with the Count of Torrenburg; after so much as they had suffered, they no longer indulged a wish for any thing except retirement and repose. Ida's resentment against her lover, for having offered his hand to Elizabeth, was not yet appeased: and after the injurious suspicions, to which her conduct at the Castle of March had (as she learned from Count Oswald's letter) given rise, she thought it highly incumbent on her to make no inquiries respecting him. She accordingly resolved to verify the remainder of her

sister's fortunate vision, and re-assume the name of Rosanna Tell.—Constantia for a while refused to follow her example, and declared her determination of hiding herself for ever from the world in the Convent of Engelberg: but Ida besought her, with so much earnestness and with so many tears, "not to deprive her of the society of the only person, who still loved her, and whom she still dared to love," that Constantia was compelled however reluctantly to give way.

A ring of some value, which Ida wore on the day, which made her a captive, and of which Randolf's respect had prevented his depriving her, purchased a small hut and garden, in which the Countesses of Werdenberg were but too happy to obtain a shelter. Here then

they remained in tranquil obscurity, unknowing and unknown: till the decease of the Count of Torrenburg and its consequences compelled them once more to take a part in the world, and again become acquainted with its splendours, and its cares.

By the will of Count Frederick, the whole of his domains descended to his wife; the Damsels of Werdenburg were disinherited, nor was this sufficient. A clause of the most disgraceful import declared the Count's reasons for renouncing them, and thus held them up to the world as proper marks for the finger of contempt. It seems, that there still existed a younger branch of the House of Werdenberg, but with whose members the Sisters had never held any intercourse. The ignominious clause in

ınt Frederick's will greatly offended
pride of these high-born noblemen.
ıt any persons belonging to their
ıily should deserve to be mentioned
ɔn record in such opprobrious terms,
ɔeared to them the most intolerable
all offences; and they vowed never
rest, till they had compelled the
linquents to renounce their title to a
me, which (till they assumed it) had
ver been stained with disgrace.—
hey agitated this business with so
ıuch effect, that at length an act was
btained from the Emperor, enjoining
wo Damsels calling themselves by the
ames of Ida and Constantia, Countesses
f Werdenberg, to lay aside those titles,
s having forfeited them by their dis-
raceful conduct, even supposing that
hey really possest by birth a right to

bear

bear them; a fact, of which, the act professed to doubt the veracity.—It also forbade the reception of the said Damsels into any religious community, except such as were specified by name, and which were those only, whose institution (as was universally known) permitted the acceptance of persons of dissolute characters for the laudable purpose of reformation.

The Lords of Werdenberg were so diligent in making this act public, that it even reached the obscure valley, in which the Sisters had sheltered themselves under borrowed names. Little as they valued the pride of birth, and the empty boast of high-sounding title, the disgrace thrown upon them by this so public act was too insulting to be endured even by their humility. It was

absolutely

absolutely necessary, that some steps should be taken to vindicate themselves from such undeserved aspersions. Accordingly without loss of time they addrest letters to the Abbess of Zurich and to their guardians, Abbot Conrad, and the good Bishop of Coira. They disclosed the place of their concealment, asserted the gross injustice of the Emperor's act, and avowed their willingness to lay every particular respecting themselves or their conduct before either of their guardians, or the respected Abbess.

Till this period they had neglected to apply to these firm friends; because they felt a total indifference to the station, which they had lost; considered the pleasures of the great world as withdrawn from them for ever; and only wished to pass the remainder of

their

their lives in tranquillity and oblivion. Their letters communicated the greatest joy to those, to whom they were addrest; and Abbot Conrad lost not a moment in hastening to comfort the poor afflicted ones, and to assure them of his unabated regard and anxiety for their welfare.

It was no difficult task for the Sisters to convince this partial friend of their innocence. He insisted upon the necessity of their returning to the world, and Constantia consented to quit her solitude: but Ida was resolute never again to resume her proper station, till her honour and reputation were re-established in their full purity and with undiminished lustre.

And how is this to be effected? Oh! Elizabeth, it is you alone, who can

answer

answer that question. You have seen, how these unjustly persecuted Girls have been deprived of every thing, of their inheritance, of their fair fame, of the very name, to which their birth entitled them: you have seen their innocence and your own error. Your generosity, your love of justice will tell you, what you ought to do: to those noble sentiments, to your own noble self, I dare trust my cause without a single terror.—

Henry of Montfort's illness had been long and dangerous. He was scarcely recovered, when two successive attacks of apoplexy convinced his uncle of a truth, which he had long been unwilling to confess to himself. He could no longer deny, that it would be more suitable at his time of life to turn his

thoughts

thoughts towards the grave, than the bridal bed; but still though he was himself no longer the hero of them, his marrying-plans preserved their long-established dominion over his fancy. Henry was his undoubted heir; his attention to Count Egbert during his illness had made a deep and very favourable impression upon the old man's mind; he suddenly became a favourite, to secure whose happiness in life was now Count Egbert's chief and almost only object; and in the old man's opinion, happiness in life was to be obtained by no other possible means, than by marriage. Henry was nearly of the same opinion with him. Unluckily, the only point, on which they differed, was the only material point in the whole affair. Both agreed, that a

marriage ought to take place; but each proposed a different person, and neither would give up the object of his choice. Henry insisted upon his engagement to Ida, and declared, that while she existed, honour as well as love forbade his offering his hand to another: while Count Egbert protested with equal vehemence, that he never would consent to the union of his heir with a girl, whom the last will of her nearest relation had deprived of her inheritance and devoted to disgrace. The bride of his selection presented herself in a far more flattering light; 'twas Elizabeth, the young and admired heiress of Torrenburg, whose hand would confer wealth and power on her husband, and whose heart had formerly been warmly disposed in Henry's favour. As he listened to this eulogium upon Elizabeth,

an involuntary sigh escaped from the nephew's bosom. Ah! he felt but too sensibly the whole value of Elizabeth, and was fully conscious, how dear she would have been to him, had not Ida possest prior and more forcible claims on his affections. Now all thoughts of Elizabeth were quite unavailing: his heart by right was another's, and was no longer worthy of Elizabeth's acceptance. This he declared to his uncle, and exprest his resolution of keeping his engagements to Ida in terms so strong, that the old Count lost his patience completely. In the heat of passion, he ordered Henry to quit the Castle that instant, nor ever presume to come again into his presence.

He was obeyed; but the command was scarcely given, before it was repented of. He reflected, that this very hand

banishment would leave his nephew at liberty to contract the union, which it was so much his wish to prevent. The old man was little acquainted with Ida's character and turn of mind: he knew not, that delicate as were her notions on the subject of honour, the warmest entreaties of her beloved Henry would by no means be sufficient to persuade her to become Countess of Montfort.

Count Egbert's guards followed Henry, overtook him, and brought him back to his paternal Castle, where he was ordered into close confinement. How little did the writer of these lines ever imagine, that he should live to see menaces and chains employed, in order to compel a youth to give his hand to Elizabeth of March!

Henry exclaimed loudly against such *injustice!* He demanded, that the opi-

nion

nion of his proposed bride should be taken in this affair. He declared himself convinced, that he could not possibly appeal to a more just tribunal, and that after what had past, a proposal of marriage would be rejected with no less firmness by Elizabeth, than by himself. The old Count denied this last assertion most positively. He maintained (and not without some show of plausibility) that in spite of his past offences Elizabeth was still weak enough to cherish a secret attachment to the man, by whom she had been so unworthily forsaken: nay, he even went so far as to profess his firm belief, that the severity, with which she had treated the Damsels of Werdenburg, had its origin in this attachment; and that nothing but female spite and jealousy against a successful rival, made

her

her so obstinately shut her eyes and ears against the justice of those claims, which in the opinion of many persons (thoroughly capable to decide upon such matters) were held to be most just, and founded on an unquestionable basis.

Such indeed was now the general opinion. Time, and the exertions of their guardians had cleared up many suspicious circumstances respecting the Sisters; and the popular cry was fast turning to the side of Count Frederick's lineal heirs. Their uncle's testament underwent much censure, and created a kind of prejudice and ill will against Her, who had benefited by it so largely. Elizabeth herself was in some measure the cause of this loss of public estimation, which in truth every day diminished. She had accustomed the world

for

for so long to see her act with uniform generosity, and to consider her as a person totally exempt from the ordinary imperfections of her sex, that as soon as her husband's will was made public, every one prepared themselves for some decided act of heroic self-denial in favour of the disinherited Sisters; and which perhaps they would not have expected from any other than Elizabeth, because they would not have believed any other capable of such an act. However, it is certain, that from Her they *did* expect it; it is also certain, that their expectations were disappointed; and unwilling to allow, that they had themselves required too much, they were extremely displeased with Her, whom they accused of not having done enough. Besides this, Elizabeth evidently fell into a great

error,

error, in dealing with her inherited possessions, as if they had been her own purchased and personal property. Formed by nature to be no less rash than generous, she gave away whole districts, castles, and towns with as little concern, as if they had been of no more value than the roses, which encircled her head or bloomed upon her bosom.

This inconsiderate liberality produced the greatest discontent among those subjects, whom she bestowed away with so little ceremony. She is already informed of the uproar and confusion, which ensued; but she is by no means aware of the extreme danger, in which she was at one time involved. The discontented vassals denied her right to make them over to another, and declared themselves to be lawfully

the vassals of the young Countesses of Wardenberg: they entered into a secret correspondance with the neighbouring Switzers: they dispatched messengers to the valley, where the Sisters had taken refuge, and assured them of their firm resolution to support their rights. Constantia was already departed; they found Ida alone in her humble cottage, and made the purport of their coming known to her. Tears of joy trickled down her cheeks as she listened, and her first words were prayers of gratitude to Heaven.

—"My worthy friends," said she at length, "your words have given me the only comfort, which I now could look for on this side the grave! The Ida, whom a whole good and honest people demands for their sovereign,

on

can never be that traitress, that unprincipled wanton, that ungrateful snake, which I have been termed so publicly and so unjustly. Your application has given me back my honour, has reconciled me with myself: this is all I could wish for; now leave me, my friends, and bear with you my warmest thanks. Be faithful to your liege-lady; Heaven and my uncle's will have destined her for your protrectress, and you will find her a noble one. I know well her merits, and admire them; I envy her not her good fortune; but be assured, that even did my happiness depend on my establishing those rights, which you state me to possess, the Ida whom your deputation has thus signally honoured, at least deserves that honour too well, to seek any benefit however great by

clandestine, and therefore by unworthy means."—

The deputies listened to her with astonishment; they requested her to reflect coolly upon their proposals, and left her with a promise to return.

And they *did* return, furnished with new and much more forcible arguments; —and yet those arguments were employed in vain. They had discovered Ida's former affection for Henry: they applied to Count Egbert, and laid their plans before him. As they appeared to reconcile all differences between his nephew and himself, he readily promised his assistance: and the deputies now delivered a letter to Ida, in which Count Egbert assured her of Henry's unabated attachment: he magnified the fortitude, with which his nephew had resisted

sisted all attempts to shake his fidelity; and he conjured her to accept the title of Countess of Montfort, since without the possession of her hand there was no happiness in life for Henry.

The poor Ida wept, as she read this letter: every line seemed an arrow in her very heart. She was conscious, that in her present humble state she could never become her lover's bride, and that the old Count's consent was entirely grounded on the prospect of her succeeding to Count Frederick's inheritance.—Yet she still shuddered at the thoughts of obtaining the accomplishment of her fondest wishes by means, which she felt to be unworthy of her; she still positively rejected the proposals of the embassy, and declared *herself convinced*, that Henry of Montfort

fort was as little disposed as herself to assist any plan, whose object was to injure Elizabeth. The deputies still prest her to comply; they would take no refusal; and at length to free herself from their importunity she left the valley privately, and took refuge within a Convent, the name of which she concealed from every one except her sister and the Abbot of Cloister Curwald.

Elizabeth's knowledge of these transactions was confined to their mere outward appearance. She knew, that she was calumniated by secret enemies, and justified by unknown friends; but little did she suspect, that these favourable judges of her conduct were those very persons, against whom she had nourished in her heart the most inveterate prejudice. In vain, that she was not

without

without real friends, willing even to risk her displeasure, rather than suffer her to labour under such gross errors: the Abbot of Curwald often endeavoured to lay the history of the unfortunate Sisters before her eyes, but in vain: No one understood better than Elizabeth the secret of imposing silence on those, whom she suspected of an intention to say that, which it was by any means disagreeable to her to hear.

She suddenly thought fit to take up her abode in the Convent of Zürich, and there indulge her grief for the loss of Count Frederick without restraint. This was a step, which her differences with her discontented vassals rendered both agreeable to herself, and proper in the eye of the world: into the bargain, it possest the further advantage (though

she thought it as well to confine this motive for her seclusion to her own bosom) of freeing her from the wearisome remonstrances of the Abbot, and from the truths, which he was so obstinately bent upon placing before her eyes. Its true, she was still exposed to receiving letters from him; but those it was in her power not to answer; or indeed not even to read, if the first lines gave her reason to believe, that the remainder would afford her but little satisfaction.

But Elizabeth was too good, too noble, to be entirely deserted by truth and virtue, however sedulously she strove to shun them. They pursued her to the Convent, and their imploring voices often spoke to her in the stillness of her solitary cell. I know from good authority, that many a seed of good has

fallen

fallen upon her heart, which she has vainly endeavoured to choak in brambles: and should I succeed in my attempt to seduce her unconsciously into perusing the history of the Damsels of Werdenberg, under the title of "The Sisters without a Name," (a title which describes them but too well, since injustice and error have robbed them of their proper one) I shall look upon the victory as already won.

And yet by such a victory, what will be gained? How is it in Elizabeth's power to benefit these persecuted girls? Constantia, who (unknown to her former friend) now inhabits the same Convent with her, demands nothing in this world except permission to take the veil: Ida is contented with her humble habitation near the Lake of Thun;

and far from requiring from Elizabeth anything more than mutual forgiveness, she is willing to compensate for the involuntary mortification, which she caused to her on her bridal-day, by the sacrifice of every thing; even of that, which she holds dearest! Yes, Elizabeth; she is willing to sacrifice even the hand and affections of her Henry!

The proposal made by the deputies of Elizabeth's rebellious vassals was laid before Henry by his uncle. The plan, whose object was the ruin of the unsuspecting Countess of Torrenburg, was so well laid, and the preparations were in such forwardness, that it seemed almost impossible for the design to fail. Henry gave a feigned compliance to the old Count's proposals, and was rewarded with his liberty. The first use, which

He made of it, was to hasten to Richard of Ulmenhorst, to whom Elizabeth had entrusted the government of her domains during her seclusion in the Convent. To him did young Montfort discover the conspiracy against the Heiress of Torrenburg, and they agreed upon measures for defeating it. The noble Richard had loved Elizabeth in the earliest spring of his life, and had no reason to despair, till the blooming Henry appeared and won the prize, almost before he himself desired it. Richard now first knew the real character of his so long-hated rival: and to know it, and admire it, were but the same. The conspiracy was defeated; the new friends separated; and Henry hastened to the Lake of Thun.

—"Ida!" he exclaimed, "I am thine,

and for ever! I have broken through every obstacle, which divided us; I have severed every chain, which detained me from your arms. I renounce the name of Montfort, which has inflicted upon me nothing but misfortune: never shall the man, who so unjustly lords it over my possessions, hear of his persecuted nephew more. You, Ida, must renounce the title of Werdenberg, which has been the cause to you of so much sorrow, and resume that beloved name, which you bore, when we first met. This cottage, this garden, and this little flock are enough to content all the wishes of two loving hearts; and Erwin Melthal and Rosanna Tell will pass together such days, as even, the happiest might look upon with envy."—

Ida felt in her bosom a painful con-

flict between love and duty. She had renounced wealth and splendour for herself without a pang; but ought she to renounce them for Henry? Ought she to suffer him to quit for her a station, on which he was calculated to confer such lustre? Such were her doubts; yet undoubtedly love would at length have triumphed, had not a report reached her, that Elizabeth's situation was become more difficult than ever. Her vassals had given up in despair all hopes of persuading the Sisters to contest the Count of Torrenburg's will. They found, that Elizabeth was destined to remain their sovereign: yet they protested (with such violence as gave reason to apprehend the most dangerous consequences from a refusal) that

on

on one condition only would they return peaceably to their obedience. That condition was, that if Elizabeth was to be still their liege-lady, Henry of Montfort should become their leige-lord: and they swore, that she never should enter the Castle of Torrenburg except as Henry's wife, unless she chose to see her way strewn with bleeding corses.

Letters from Richard of Ulmenhorst confirmed this report; and the generous Ida's resolution was taken without a moment's delay.

—"Go, my beloved!" she exclaimed and embraced him for the last time. "You were not born to waste your days in the obscurity of these shades. Power and splendour form the proper sphere for you to move in, and those it

is not in the poor Ida's power to bestow! Go then, Henry; protect Elizabeth; content her people; make your wife, make your vassals, make *yourself* happy; your praises will reach me even in this secluded valley..... Then *I* shall be happy too!"—

Henry obeyed her: to refuse was in truth impossible! With every hour and from every quarter fresh entreaties arrived, all assuring him, that if he meant to rescue the Countess of Torrenburg from the fury of her rebellious subjects, not a moment must be lost.— He determined to sacrifice every other consideration, to that of Elizabeth's welfare: he is arrived at Zurich: he has renounced his claims to Ida's affections; Ida has renounced her rights to her

her uncle's inheritance; and to-morrow will see Henry of Montfort kneeling at the feet of Elizabeth, and will hear him offer her his hand for the second time.

ELIZABETH OF TORRENBURG.

PART THE EIGHTH.

Elizabeth, Countess of Torrenburg, to Conrad, Abbot of Cloister-Curwald.

CONRAD! Conrad! how was it possible for me to mistake for a moment the characters of *your* pen, for those of any other? Of that pen, which like its master's persuasive tongue, knows how

to

to blend truth, raillery, and praise together so artfully, that the heart feels itself irresistibly subdued, irresistibly compelled to follow, whither-soever it is your pleasure to conduct it!

I was aware of your power: it was therefore that I fled from your presence, that I shunned your conversation, that I declined your correspondence. I knew well, that your eloquence could give a fair appearance even to the worst cause; and at that time Ida's cause was believed by me to be one of the worst, otherwise I would not have fled from its discussion.

But now how are my sentiments changed! Helen, sainted Helen! now then the time is arrived for my imitating thy glorious example: Ida is a second

Anna-

tulberga: Elizabeth shall be a second
len!

No: Helen's curse shall not fall upon
head: I will not hate those, whom
has blest; I will not rob her beloved
es of their inheritance. Look down
me, fair saint! Behold; I sacrifice
dis that, which is most precious to
e, the affection of my heart, the hap-
ness of my life, the hand of Henry:
d can you doubt, whether I will restore
her that which I prize so little, a few
ndfuls of sordid earth?

Conrad, my whole soul is in a storm!
scarcely know, what I say . . . . . what
write . . . . . what I think . . . . . in
the present moment, I can only feel!—
Yet ere I close my letter, learn thus
much. Constantia is with me; yester-

day

day I clasped her to my heart. Alas! for the gentle, innocent, suffering girl! Never did my bosom harbour against *her* one spark of ill-will: her intercourse would have been like balsam to the wounds of my heart, even while I hated Ida as the inflictor of those wounds. It was cruel in you, my good Abbot, to let me inhabit the same dwelling with her for so long, and yet keep me in ignorance, that such a blessing was so near me.

In truth, you have not dealt well with me throughout; neither yourself, Conrad, nor your confidante the Abbess of Zurich. The most secret recesses of my soul were known to you, while I believed them to be closed against all the world; you knew much, of which I

would

Amalberga: Elizabeth shall be a second Helen!

No: Helen's curse shall not fall upon *my* head: I will not hate those, whom *she* has blest; I will not rob her beloved ones of their inheritance. Look down on me, fair saint! Behold; I sacrifice to Ida that, which is most precious to me, the affection of my heart, the happiness of my life, the hand of Henry: and can you doubt, whether I will restore to her that which I prize so little, a few handfuls of sordid earth?

Conrad, my whole soul is in a storm! I scarcely know, what I say . . . . . what I write . . . . . what I think . . . . . in the present moment, I can only feel!— Yet ere I close my letter, learn thus much. Constantia is with me; yester-

day

muscript!—the Abbess is ill..... I fear ill unto death!—I flew to her sick bed, and with the enthusiasm of my sensations forced her back from contemplating the fields of blessedness, to which she is already so near, that she needs but to close her eyes in order to behold the reflection of their glories! She smiled at what I said to her, and which must have appeared to her so trifling, so unworthy of a thought, when compared with those images by which her mind had just been occupied.—Her words inscribed themselves upon my heart in characters of flame: you will soon be informed of their effects.

Constantia was summoned—the Abbess joined our hands; we sank upon each other's bosom. No explanation

was

was necessary; no one spoke a word; we understood *her* ..... we understood ourselves.

—"Now then," said the invalid in a soft faltering voice, which seemed a middle tone between a mortal's and a spirit's: "now then nothing is wanting ..... but the presence of Ida!"—

—"Of Ida," I repeated, "and of her Henry!"—

And Henry came; came the next morning, as you had assured me that he would, and for that purpose which you mentioned he has vindicated my cause like an hero, and has fully established my authority and my rights: he has knelt at my feet; he has offered me his hand. He has named love as the reward of his services, and has obtained the boon: how could

I refuse

I refuse the reward of love to the most pure, the most tender, the most unfortunate of lovers?

Constantia, Countess of Werdenburg, to Abbot Conrad.

ELIZABETH'S letter must already have apprized you, my kind protector, of the favourable change, which has taken place in the situation of your wards. Count Henry has been here, and is again departed. He came by Ida's command to offer his hand to Elizabeth: he is returned at Elizabeth's desire to salute her rival as joint-heiress with myself of the rich domains of Torrenburg.

—"I do no more than my duty," said Elizabeth, when Henry endeavoured

to express his gratitude. "Your heart belongs to Ida, and never *ought* to be another's, therefore never *can* be mine. As to Count Frederick's inheritance, demand of this venerable man, whose claim to it is the most just; that of Elizabeth, or of the Damsels of Werdenberg."—

As she spoke, the door opened, and a silver-haired stranger entered the apartment. It was the Sage of Zurich, the well-known Albert Reding, to whom Elizabeth had referred her disputed claims, previous to your unveiling the truth of our history, and removing her prejudices against us. Yes, Conrad, yes! even had she still continued to abhor us, so sure as I have life, Elizabeth would still have acted by us with justice!

The venerable Albert confirmed Elizabeth's declaration; he even consented to accompany the enraptured Montfort to Ida's valley, and make known to her this sudden change in her situation. They would fain have persuaded me to join their party: but I could not endure the thoughts of quitting my generous friend, at a moment, when she so greatly needs support after this difficult self-victory, and under the deep affliction which she feels at the approaching dissolution of our worthy Abbess.— Farewell, dear father, and believe, that the memory of your kindness shall live in my heart for ever!

Abbot Conrad to Sigisbert, Bishop of Coira.

COUNT HENRY of Montfort and his bride are established in the Castle of Torrenburg. Their arrival threw the populace into an ecstasy of joy, and all inclination to uproar and revolt seems to be completely annihilated. Neither is Elizabeth any longer an object of aversion to her former subjects; you are already informed of the laudable manner, in which she past the month immediately succeeding the death of the Abbess of Zurich, and which she entirely dedicated to providing for the future benefit of those, over whom she was so soon to renounce all jurisdiction,

and

and who (while under her command) had been so little sensible of the value of such a mistress.

—" The few minutes," said she, when she addrest them for the last time; " the few minutes, during which I can still consider you as my subjects, shall be employed in convincing you, that you mistook my character; and that your welfare neither is now, nor ever was, indifferent to the heart of Elizabeth. I am preparing to resign my authority into the hands of the Damsels of Werdenberg; but that authority shall be the only one worth having, authority over a *free people*."—

What she promised, she has performed most amply. Everything in these regions breathes freedom and happiness; she has established the privi-

leges of this people on grounds so firm, that even were the antient Tyrants of Carlsheim and Sargans to resume their abused authority, they would be compelled to leave their subjects in possession of their unviolated freedom.

Henry and Ida would fain have exprest to her their gratitude in person; but she has declined receiving them for the present, under colour of too great affliction for the late loss of her friend, the Abbess. How say you, my Lord Bishop?—I fear, the heart of our Elizabeth is by no means healed, since she cannot prevail on herself to endure the sight of her rival's happiness, even although that happiness is a work of her own creation.

Well! well!—time I hope, will do much; and (unless I flatter myself with believing

believing too ardently what I wish) the attentions of Richard of Ulmenhorst will do more. This excellent young man is full of hope, that he may yet be able to establish his former claims on the heart of Elizabeth; Ida and Henry encourage him in his sanguine expectations; and no efforts of mine, that can advance his wishes, shall be wanting, you may be sure. However, nothing can be attempted, till St. Helena's Festival arrives; on that day Elizabeth has promised to receive all her friends (Henry and Ida not excepted) and every one looks forward with the utmost impatience to this appointed day.

Of course Constantia did not fail to be present at the wedding of her beloved sister. Methinks, her passion for the Cloister is sensibly diminished since her

re-establishment in her legitimate claims. With my whole heart shall I say—"Amen!"—to her resolution to lay aside the veil: she is so well calculated to form the blessing of an earthly bridegroom, that it would be a sin to bury her within the walls of a Convent. She already numbers many powerful noblemen in the list of her admirers; but no one hangs upon her smiles with more perfect adoration, than Count Oswald, Elizabeth's brother. He has confided his passion to me, and I am best able to judge the nature of his sentiments. No contracted views of interest (as many unjustly suppose, and as perhaps Constantia herself suspects) induce him to kneel at the feet of the rich Heiress of Sargans: no one can imagine such a motive, who is ac-

quainted

quainted with the real character of the proud but noble Oswald, the lustre of which is bright and glorious as the light of the sun; though like that luminary it is now and then obscured by a few dark spots, moveable and insignificant. No; he seeks the hand of Constantia from no other cause than the consciousness of her perfections; except that he repents of his former injustice towards the Sisters, and is anxious to express his present respect in the most marked and striking manner.

I know not, what hopes he is authorized to nourish. The quiet retired Constantia gives encouragement to none of her admirers, and observes an obstinate silence respecting her intentions even to me: however, Count Oswald

possesses a powerful interest in her opinion from his being the brother of Elizabeth.—I expect that the festival of St. Helena will decide much.

Conclusion—written by Abbot Conrad.

THAT the readers of the fore-going manuscripts may not be left with their curiosity entirely ungratified, I will endeavour to fill up the chasm, which otherwise would appear in the Memoirs of Elizabeth. Let me obtain their pardon, if I relate as briefly as possible the circumstances of a scene, which produced upon my heart an impression very painful at the time, and never to be obliterated.

St. Helena's festival arrived. All those, whom Elizabeth had invited, failed not to attend at the appointed place and hour; among them were the Heiresses of Torrenburg, Count Henry

of Montfort, Count Oswald of March (Elizabeth's brother) Richard of Ulmenhorst, the Bishop of Coira, and myself.

It is the pious and laudable custom of our days (a custom, which I hope will be preserved even to the latest posterity) that all our most distinguished festivities should commence by offering an homage of adoration to the Supreme: it was therefore natural, that immediately on our arrival we should be conducted to the church belonging to the Convent of Zurich. Yet we could not help feeling some surprize, that Elizabeth as our hostess did not welcome us at the church-door, and place herself at the head of our procession, while it moved through the cloisters towards the chapel; that being

the established custom on such occasions. However, we had scarcely time to make any reflections, before we found ourselves within the chapel.

It was most gorgeously adorned, as if set out for some great solemnity. The walls were decorated with wreaths of flowers; the reliques were exposed, the pictures were uncovered: the whole wealth of the Convent was displayed, and blazed on every side; innumerable tapers in chandeliers of gold, intermingled with silver lamps, dispelled the gloom of the long aisles; and clouds of incense rolled along the fretted roof, which echoed back the melodious sounds of lutes and voices, as they swelled in full chorus from the adjoining choir. At that moment our knowledge of church-customs naturally

made

made the Bishop and myself conceive a suspicion of the purpose, for which we had been conducted thither: perhaps too, the same thought suggested itself to Constantia, for on a sudden her tears began to flow. The situation of Richard of Ulmenhorst was most distressing: he ceased not to enquire, why Elizabeth did not appear; and it was with difficulty, that Montfort, Ida, and Count Oswald (who preserved their presence of mind better than the rest) could persuade him to observe that silence, which was necessary in so holy a place.

Unhappy Richard! for many weeks past had his friends conspired to buoy him up with hopes, which this single moment was destined to destroy for ever: for now the curtain, which concealed

cealed from us the chapel's sanctuary, was withdrawn, and all our worst fears were confirmed. Elizabeth, adorned with all the pomp and splendour of wealth, and still more with all the charms, which nature had bestowed upon her superior to her whole sex, knelt before the altar, and offered up at the footstool of the Almighty's throne the greatest sacrifice, which a mortal can ever make; the sacrifice of youth, love, beauty, liberty, and life!

What impression this unexpected, this unwished-for scene made upon the assembly at large, it is neither in *my* power to describe, nor (I believe) in the power of any one of those, who were personally interested about Elizabeth. Each individual felt so much upon his own account, that he was

rendered incapable of attending to the sensations produced upon others. It was not till the awful ceremony of pronouncing the great and total renunciation was on the point of taking place, that I turned my eyes upon the countenance of the unhappy Richard: it was pale as that of a corse; and yet with every moment it seemed to grow still paler, till his eyes closed, and he sank into my arms without sentiment.

—" My soul," said Elizabeth in a firm voice, " I bequeath to him, who gave it! my body I bequeath to the grave; my wealth to the church; the domains of Torrenburg to its legitimate possessors; the recollection of Henry of Montfort to his beloved Ida; Richard of Ulmenhorst.... Richard, my friend of youth, and the truest of all lovers

....Richard,

.... Richard, whom I ought never to have quitted for the sake of any Montfort.... Ah! to what consoling Angel shall I consign the noble Richard, that she may heal the wounds inflicted by my caprice on his honest suffering heart?—Constantia! friend of my bosom, be thou that Angel! thou art far more worthy of his love than the inconstant Elizabeth, who in resigning *him*, resigns every prospect of earthly happiness; who in sacrificing *him*, offers up to Heaven the greatest sacrifice, of which her nature is capable.—Be he thine, dear injured Constantia; accept from me his hand, his heart! my injustice to Ida I have repaired by the resignation of Henry; but I still owed thee a mighty sacrifice, to efface the memory of many a bitter hour

occasioned

occasioned by my obstinacy, my persecution, my self-will.—Now then I have done with the world for ever!—Beloved-ones! I bless you!—Pray for me, and farewell!"—

The Bishop (though greatly affected by this whole unexpected scene) thought it right to wait till the conclusion of the ceremony: But anxiety for Richard, whose indisposition had occasioned the bye-standers to remove him into the open air, furnished me with an excuse for leaving the chapel, which I seized with eagerness. To say the truth, I was far from satisfied with Elizabeth's determination. I shall no doubt be severely censured by my more devout successors; yet I needs must confess, that in spite of my own vows (which I pronounced with the most heart-felt

joy.

joy, and never have felt the slightest wish to retract) yet still I say, in spite of my own vows, I never have seen without a pang society deprived of a valuable member, and those talents buried within the solitude of the Cloister, which might have made its owner a blessing to the world at large.

When the first shock was past, Richard recovered his resolution, and endeavoured to conceal the agony of his feelings under the veil of seriousness and silence. A splendid entertainment was spread before us, at which none of the holy Sisters appeared; consequently, we were at liberty to communicate our sentiments on what had just past without restraint. 'Twas the most melancholy feast, at which I ever assisted; a feast, which I shall never forget, as long

as I possess existence; it seemed to me Elizabeth's funeral-feast! we soon rose from the table, on which the viands remained untouched, and we prepared for our departure; for we thought it vain to expect admission to the newly-profest Nun, and indeed in our present temper of mind that admission was scarcely to be wished—the Bishop, however, delivered it as his opinion, that propriety required us at least to give Elizabeth the option of seeing us. Accordingly, a message informed her of our approaching departure; her answer was, that she must decline all visits, except those of Constantia and of Richard of Ulmenhorst.

They obeyed her orders. Elizabeth received them with joy and tenderness.

She

She doubted not the success of her proposal, and addrest Constantia as the heiress of Richard's heart: but she was speedily undeceived. Richard declared, in terms so express as left no doubt of his decision, that since Elizabeth was lost to the world, no refuge was left for him but the Cloister; while on the other hand, Constantia confest, that her heart was no longer in her own power. After a long and unavailing discussion, Elizabeth dismist them, whether satisfied or displeased by the firmness of her two dearest friends, it may be difficult to say: but unless I am totally ignorant of the female mind, she could not help being flattered by Richard's refusal to admit any rival to her in his heart, but God; and

probably

probably she was secretly not much incensed against Constantia for having bestowed her affections else-where.

Count Oswald, who had been by no means pleased by his sister's endeavours to unite Richard and Constantia, now felt his hopes revive: he flattered himself, that *he* was the unknown object of Constantia's choice; but in this belief he was mistaken. There was a young knight, who had offered her his heart and hand at a time, when she had nothing but a heart and hand to offer in return. Conradin, an ill-portioned brother of the Landgrave of Thuringia, would have loved her, had she been no other than Mary Tell; Conradin had been faithful to Constantia of Werdenberg under all the scorn and obloquy, under which she at one time laboured;

and

and Conradin was now the man, for whom the wealthy Heiress of Sargans rejected every other. *He* deserved the inestimable treasure of a wife like Constantia; and *she* was well worthy to be the mistress of a heart, whose tenderness and generosity could only be excelled by her own.

It was long, before Elizabeth acquired sufficient firmness to receive the personal thanks of Ida and Henry for that felicity, of which she was herself the authoress; but on the day when she was consecrated as Domina of Zurich, this long-delayed interview took place. The impression, which it made upon her mind, will be best explained by the following letter.

Elizabeth to Constantia.

At length then this dreaded interview is over: I have seen Ida and her happy husband.—Wrong me not, Constantia, by suspecting, that resentment or pique has made me delay this meeting for so long; oh! no! it was the consciousness of my own weak heart!—Even Helen of Homburg could not at once resolve to witness the happiness of Eginhart and Amalberga; and alas! I am no faultless Saint like Helen!—the Cloister is the palace of enthusiasm, is the native land of visions; its inhabitants are only happy in proportion, as those visions are sweet and soothing.

I had formed for myself a little circle of ideal companions, whom at my pleasure I could summon to dispel my solitude. My venerable friend, by the side of whose death-bed I formed the resolution of dedicating my life to the service of Heaven, was among the dearest of those apparitions. The hand of mortality had torn her from me; Enthusiasm restored her to my arms. I saw her, as if she had been still alive.... I spoke to her, and laid open the most secret folds of my heart.... I almost fancied, that at times I heard her reply in words of comfort.... Alas! the fatal sight of Ida and her Henry has dispelled all these visions, which were to me the source of so much happiness! it seemed like a flash of lightning, which penetrates through our

closed eye-lids, and wakes us suddenly from some delightful dream.—Now nothing flits before me in my solitude, but those scenes of my melancholy life, in which Ida and Montfort bore so great a share.—Leave me, oh! leave me, ye cruel thoughts, which force me back to a world of sorrow; and thou, mild-spirit of my sainted friend, return, and by thy presence aid me to prepare for that state of bliss, which *you* already enjoy, and to which I feel that *I* am hastening.

The will of Heaven be done; but the moment of dissolution will be sweet and welcome!

THE END.

Printed by D. N. SHURY, Berwick-street, Soho.